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ISSUE 331 · MAY 2005

THE PLUNDERER'S HANDBOOK
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ECOLOGY OF THE Green Hag

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ISSUE 331 MAY 2005

Dragon

VOL. XXIX NUMBER 12

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Dragon® (USPS 318-790) is published monthly by Paizo Publishing, LLC, 2700 Richards Road, Suite 201 Bellevue, WA 98005-4200, United States of America. (ISSN# 1062-2101) Periodicals Postage Paid at Bellevue, WA, and at additional mailing offices.

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POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO
Paizo Publishing, 2700 Richards Road, Suite 201, Bellevue, WA 98005-4200.

BACK ISSUES: **paizo.com/dragon** or call (425) 289-0060.

SUBSCRIPTIONS/CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Contact Paizo Publishing at **subscriptions@paizo.com** or call (425) 289-0060. Although we accept subscriptions to prison addresses, delivery is subject to the discretion and/or whim of prison personnel. If you have not received a magazine or premium, please consult with your mail room authorities. This publisher is not responsible for non-delivery.

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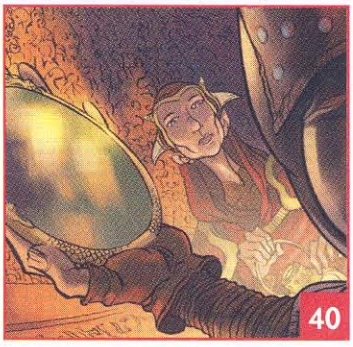

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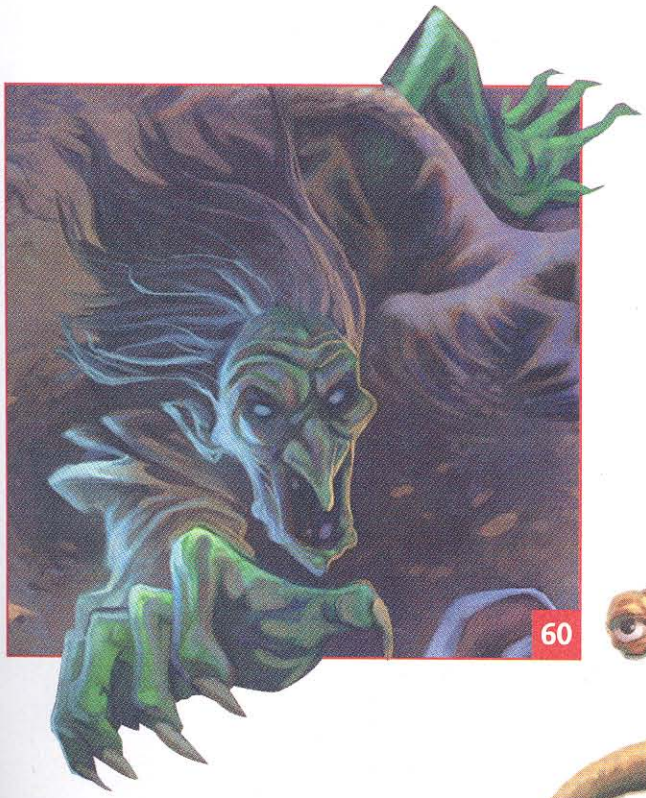

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ONLY A NINJA CAN KILL A NINJA

Growing up as a nerdy kid in the early 1980s, you could be sure of a few things. One, there was a good chance you wasted a lot of time playing with Go-Bots and Transformers. Two, you were probably into DUNGEONS & DRAGONS. Three, you were obsessed with ninjas. Sure, ninjas had been around for centuries, but it wasn't until the early 80s that they made a big splash in the United States.

I recently went back to the movies that kicked off America's ninja craze: *Enter the Ninja* and *Revenge of the Ninja*, which both starred the inimitable Sho Kosugi, an undisputed master of the ninja arts. Undisputed in early 1980s terms, that is. These days the movies are notable mostly for their schlocky violence and gratuitous topless female scenes, another staple of the 1980s. Yet again, I realized that you can't really go back to the movies you loved as a kid. They seem horrible and cheap by today's standards. I like to call it the Krull Effect.

But they more than hit the spot with a young Erik Mona, and with a lot of other young Americans, too. Who my age didn't know a kid who ordered a ninja suit from the back of a ninja magazine? Thanks to Sho Kosugi's movies, we were inundated with foam ninja throwing stars, rubber ninja nunchucks, ninja headbands, ninja video games, ninja coloring books, and much, much more. The period from 1981 to about 1985 was like a four-year ninja festival, and I for one couldn't get enough of it.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS got into the act in 1985 with *Oriental Adventures*, a hardcover book that finally brought my favorite silent killer to my favorite roleplaying game. TSR scrapped the original cover for *Oriental Adventures* in favor of a new composition by Jeff Easley depicting a samurai squaring off against, you guessed it, a ninja. The world, and countless D&D campaigns, would never be the same.

But time marched on, and America began to tire of ninjas. Ninjas of the teenage mutant turtle variety choked the Toys R Us action figure lanes. Once "unique" *G.I. Joe* characters like Snake Eyes and Stormshadow were joined by two-bit poseurs like the female ninja Jinx and finally by an entire "Ninja Force." Michael Dudikoff abandoned the already terrible *American Ninja* movie franchise for such stellar films as *Soldier Boyz* and *Musketeers Forever*. Somewhere in Asia, Sho Kosugi, the master ninja himself, starred in an exercise show called *Ninjaerobics*. The ninja, officially, was over.

Fast forward to a few weeks ago. I'm at work, smiling smugly to myself after having just sent out the email invitations for my new D&D campaign, which will serve as a testing ground for the 12-installment Age of Worms Adventure Path we'll be starting next month in the pages of *DUNGEON* magazine. I invited the entire *DRAGON*/*DUNGEON* editorial and art staff to play, and was looking forward to getting behind the DM's screen for the first time in years.

Ever eager Mike McArtor, one of *DRAGON*'s fine assistant editors, spoke up over the cubicles almost immediately. "I'm really looking forward to your new campaign, boss," Mike said. "Is it ok if I play a ninja?"

Mike couldn't see me at the time, but I'm pretty sure I scowled. Didn't he know about Michael Dudikoff and the Ninja Force and *Ninjaerobics*? Didn't he know that the ninja was over? Besides, how in heavens was I going to fit a ninja into my beloved WORLD OF GREYHAWK, which utterly lacked anything resembling the Japanese culture that spawned the real world ninja? "No, Mike," I said, trying to be as polite as possible. "You can't play a ninja in my campaign."

A few days passed, and I began to feel guilty about turning him down. I began to view GREYHAWK's inability to accommodate ninjas as a flaw, rather than a feature. Therefore, I began to see my refusal to allow ninjas into my campaign a flaw of my DM style. I tried to remember all of the things I loved about ninjas in the 80s, and made some changes to my campaign to allow for a cadre of silent masked killers. I'm not calling them ninjas, but the effect is the same. Mike gets to play a character with throwing stars and crazy martial arts, and he seems genuinely happy about it. I'm happy to have expanded my limits to accommodate a great player.

But I'm drawing the line at Ninjaerobics.

ERIK

Erik Mona
Editor-in-Chief

LETTERS

Tell us what you think of this issue. Send an email to **scalemail@paizo.com**. Please include your name, city, and state.

The Goodness Is Unbearable

I've about had enough. Please stop putting so much good reading content in your magazine! I don't have the time to read it all before the next one arrives!

Thanks in advance (and keep up the good work).

Lewis Utley
Wokingham, Berkshire UK

We'll see what we can do.

Warlock Class Acts, Please

This is the first time I've ever written to your magazine after reading it since the onset of third edition. I have only missed one issue and ended up finding a back copy of it. I'm writing to tell you that I've really enjoyed the magazine and the new articles you've added like Class Acts. My only suggestion for the magazine in its new format is to maybe expand the Class Acts section to encompass the other base classes Wizards of the Coast has published in the other books.

Warlocks, marshals, ninjas, and scouts are all classes with twenty levels and a whole world of opportunity. Maybe we could see some ideas on how to make these classes unique? It would give your writers a chance to do something different, other than the initial classes in the *Player's Handbook*.

All in all, I like the new style, especially now that it isn't confined to any specific world. Keep up the good work!

David Wray
Newport News, VA

While we want to keep the Class Acts section focused on the core classes introduced in the Player's Handbook, *look for other articles supporting the new "core" classes soon. Speaking personally, I've got a scout and a ninja in my Age of Worms Adventure Path playtest campaign, so I'd certainly find such articles useful. I know a lot of you will, too. If you haven't yet checked out any of the classes in the* Complete *books, I highly recommend that you do. They give experienced players some new toys to play with, and they add breadth to the fantasy provided by the core rules. They won't ever take over the magazine, but they will probably appear from time to time.*

Dragon Annual No. 6?

Reading through issue #329's Scale Mail this morning, I found a reference to *Dragon Annual* #6. After many moments of wonder I looked through the back issues of *Dragon* on my shelf to find that I do not have that annual and was also unable to find it in the back issues section of your web site. Have I just missed out or is this something to look forward to in the future?

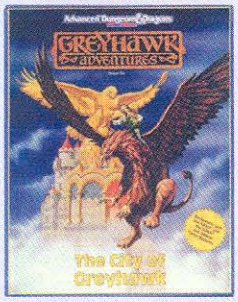
Darren McDowell
Portland, TN

2001's Dragon Annual *#6 was titled "d20 Special" on the cover, and featured a painting by Wheel of Time cover artist Darrell K. Sweet. It contained articles explaining the then-new d20 System, tips on adapting your favorite TV shows to d20, and glimpses at third-party d20 material like Freeport and Dragonstar. You can find it on the Paizo website in the "special issues" section of the* Dragon *store.*

Epic Dragon

You guys put out a great magazine, but I was wondering if you were ever going to put out more information

BLAST FROM THE PAST
THE CITY OF GREYHAWK



Greyhawk, D&D's beloved original setting, took its name from the world's most important urban area, the Free City of Greyhawk. In 1989, TSR created the first RPG supplement featuring the metropolis in *The City of Greyhawk* boxed set. The box contained four full-sized (meaning eight-panel) maps, two 96-page books (*Greyhawk: Folk, Feuds, and Factions* and *Greyhawk: Gem of the Flanaess*), and twenty-four cardstock adventure idea generators.

The cardstock adventure ideas are neat and the books brim with Greyhawk lore that leaves this magazine's editor-in-chief and associate editor slavering, but the maps upgrade this product from merely functional to infinitely useful.

One map shows a fairly standard cartographic representation of the City of Greyhawk, complete with lettered key that corresponds to descriptions found in the *Greyhawk: Gem of the Flanaess* book. It serves its purpose as a functional city map. A second map puts the city in perspective with the setting that bears its name, showing such adventure-laden locales as the Cairn Hills, the Mistmarsh, Nyr Dyv, and Woolly Bay. The third map ramps up the coolness by showing the major underground waterways, sewer lines, tunnels, and crypts, and provides outlines of above-ground buildings for reference. Best of all, the final map provides an isometric map-picture of the city, showing the height and appearance of every building in the city. That's right... every building!

on epic level characters and campaigns? I like to play at high level, but haven't seen anything new since issue #297. Is there a future plan for another epic issue, or is Wizards of the Coast going to come out with a *Complete Epic* book? If nothing else, I'd like to see an issue dedicated to higher-level characters, with prestige classes taking characters from level 15 and up.

Dave Pepper
Mountain Home, ID

We don't currently have any plans to revisit epic material in the pages of this magazine, but you'll want to check our sister magazine, DUNGEON, *which next month features "The Quicksilver Hourglass," an adventure for 30th-level characters. If Wizards of the Coast plans to release another epic book, I'm afraid we don't know about it.*

HAIKU

I attended a local LIVING GREYHAWK convention in Champaign, IL a couple of weekends back. After a rough afternoon slot, I composed the following haiku during the dinner break to sum up my experiences:

Dice want to kill me.
Attack roll? Saving throw? Ha!
It's another one.

Chris Riff
Chicago, IL

You send a short note,
To the poets of DRAGON.
We respond to it.

WHOA

Is it just me, or do chick gamers scare you, too? When chicks get into games they get way too good at it. But don't get me wrong, it's *hot!* I love chick gamers. When I went to Gen Con, I was worried I wouldn't see any good looking girls or women, but I saw so many I was loving it. What do you guys think?

Ethan Lafond
Los Angeles, CA

I think I wish they made up more than 6% of our readership.

CUBE-ZILLA

Dragon Talk

Like all wars, the war over who has the coolest desktop action figures is won or lost by whoever maintains the most cutting-edge arsenal. If you've been forced to escalate in response to Bob in Accounting's acquisition of Alien Hominid figures, then point your browser to **neokaiju.com** and bear witness to a set of figurines like you've never seen before. Seriously: unlike most figures, the bizarre critters of the Neokaiju Project are not derived from any movie, game, or cartoon. Each of the project's five talented artists created one figure based on mythical Japanese monsters (kaiju) and one original creation. For example, Nuthugger, a sinisterly cute green squirrel, or Steam Punk, a three-headed, winged, cast-iron-potbelly-stoved, red-eyed... King Ghidorah. Although so indie that few have ever heard of them, the Neo Kaiju collection exhibits obvious artistic skill. Obscurity plus quality equals the atom bomb of desktop action figure collections. –Mike Fehlauer

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

I am a middle school teacher in Oregon. Six years ago, we had a group of boys who were very noisy in a study hall. Like all sixth-grade boys, they had boundless energy and nowhere to put it. I was not the teacher of the class, but after noticing one boy reading the third edition D&D *Players' Handbook* (which I had just recently bought even though I had not played in nearly 15 years), I sat down with the boy. Our conversation soon became a circle of boys, and I talked with them about the game that I have loved since fourth grade. Soon we started an after school club with the condition that they keep up on their class work and homework so that we could play. It was an amazing motivator!

KNOWLEDGE CHECK
What's the name of this unwieldly starfishlike weapon?

Now, six years later, I run four after school D&D groups—one still features some members of that original sixth-grade group that are now juniors in high school. (Imagine going back to your middle school to play games with your teacher!) From four it has grown to include nearly 35 kids who have come to share with me the love of D&D. It has not been easy. I have had to fight parents who say I am promoting violence, evil, and even Satanism, but the smiles on those kids' faces when they solve the puzzle, conquer the monster, or save the city are all worth it. I have seen some students who struggle with social skills learn to compromise, communicate well, and figure out the nature of what is supposedly "good" and "evil." The game is about choices, and I am glad that so many continue to learn to play the game from me every year. Thank you, DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, for all the fun and all the life-long lessons disguised as a game.

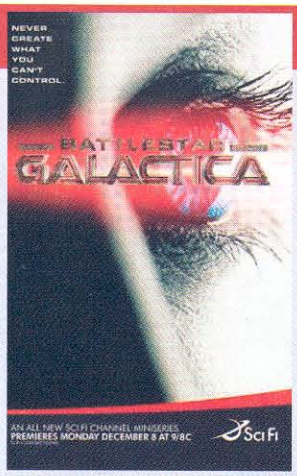
Christina Tracy
Salem, OR

At the risk of repeating myself for the millionth time, I learned how to play D&D in an after school class exactly like the one you're teaching. A part of me has always worried that classes like that would have died out when the "fad"

GOOD SCI-FI ON TELEVISION? BS!

Dragon Talk

Battlestar Galactica (the original TV series) is one of those Gen X cultural icons that definitely benefits from nostalgia. The core concept was great: The last remnants of human civilization limp through space in a ragtag fleet, searching for a mythical homeworld (Earth) that might or might not exist, all the while pursued by genocidal robots—former slave-droids that revolted and wiped out humankind *Terminator*-style. Memory highlights this cool nomads-in-space plot while ignoring the show's cheesy dialogue and looped action scenes. Thankfully, *Battlestar Galactica* (the new TV series) brings these rosy recollections to life with better actors, expensive sets and locations, special effects and camera work from the guys who did *Firefly*, and even a new plot twist of paranoia. In this updated version of *Battlestar* the Cylons have evolved from their mechanistic origins into something like *Blade Runner's* Replicants: they look and sound like humans, have human emotions, and might not even be aware that they're Cylon. Smart sci-fi is still alive on TV thanks to this tautly written recollection. Er, recreation. –Mike Fehlauer



aspect of D&D faded away in the late 1980s, but it's reassuring to know that folks like Christina are still carrying the torch. Who knows, Christina? Maybe one of your young players will be editing DRAGON *one day!*

IF IT'S NOT ONE THING...

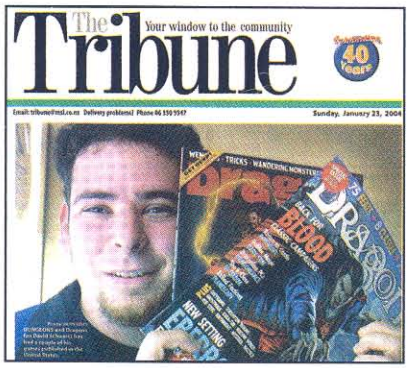
Well I was looking over some old issues and some new issues and what I found was quite interesting. In the old issues people complained about how the issues were too centralized and after a while they tired of reading about the same things. But in the new issues people were complaining about how the issues were not centralized enough. Can't people make up their minds? Well, I think either way you are doing a good job. Every issue I manage to find something interesting to use, either for use with one of my characters or as a DM. Also, where is the Caption Contest? That was always funny, no matter how lame it was. In any case, keep up what you are doing, because for every 1,000 people who complain there are another 10,000 who are fully contented by everything you do.

Michael Pidacks
Boston, MA

The Caption Contest vanished before my time, but I think I prefer Tony Moseley spending his time on a full page of Zogonia every month. It's my favorite cartoon in a long, long time. And a lot of those captions were pretty awful.

Like every DRAGON *editor before me, I'm tinkering with a way to bring back Dragonmirth, a page of short strips and single-panel gags. When I first started reading* DRAGON, *Dragonmirth was by far my favorite part of the magazine, the first thing I'd flip to as soon as my subscription arrived. But it's difficult to wrangle a bunch of cartoonists, and it's difficult to make the section consistently funny. I recently took a trip through the archive, and I'd guess 85% of those strips weren't the least bit humorous. On the other hand, I copied a handful of them and posted them on my office wall, so there's a lot of potential.*

As for complainers, well, we'll always have them. But if my time over on DUNGEON *magazine has taught me anything, it's that even the folks who bitterly complain about the magazine buy it because they love* DUNGEONS & DRAGONS *and believe in the magazines' potential. And often, their criticisms are valid. The best decision I ever made on that magazine was to listen to what the readers wanted, and make changes that would make the magazine better for everyone. Only time will tell if I succeeded (thanks in no small part to the help of an incredible staff), but the early indicators are good.*



DRAGON MADE ME FAMOUS

I want to say thank you to the folks at Paizo. Not only did you give me my dream of being published in *Dragon* magazine, you also helped me achieve my other goal of being a human interest story in a local newspaper.

David Schwartz
Palmerston North, New Zealand

KNOWLEDGE CHECK ANSWER

Answer: It's the deadly throwing weapon from *Krull*: the glaive! Glaives are pole arms. Can't you tell?

BEST SCI-FI SHOW NOT ON TV

Dragon Talk

"Take my love, take my land, take me where I cannot stand. I don't care; I'm still free. You can't take the sky from me." These opening lyrics instantly set the mood for the television show *Firefly*: sorrowful and defiant. Created by Joss Whedon (also responsible for *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Angel*), this masterpiece combined a perfect blend of hard sci-fi (no sound in space, no aliens, no hand-held laser guns) and classic western (gunfights, double-crosses, bar brawls) elements. Even though horribly butchered and then cancelled by Fox (they aired episodes out of order—the pilot was aired last), *Firefly* gained tremendous popularity through DVD sales and evangelical fans, ultimately compelling Universal to produce a feature-length *Firefly* movie, currently entitled *Serenity* and due out this Fall. If you wished *Star Wars* had focused more on Han and less on Luke and his issues, be sure to check out *Firefly*. –Mike Fehlauer

Bland-Aid

Okay, for starters let me just say that I recently renewed my subscription. After waiting patiently for my check to clear and receiving my second issue, I must say that I find the issue rather bland. I know some people have an interest in things of Earth's past and might actually run adventures based on the history of our planet. Personally though, if I wanted that kind of info I'd look it up the net and stat out my own monsters (which I have done in the past). Anyway, I found most of the issue unusable. My bigger gripe is with the loss of the Winning Races article. I enthusiastically enjoy reading it and finding a way to incorporate them into my campaigns. Where did it go and is it going to come back?

Charles Wenzler, Jr.
Scottsdale, AZ

Sorry that the issue didn't provide what you were looking for, Charles. The great thing about a general magazine like Dragon *is that you can be sure each month's content will differ from the last. Even if the features miss their mark, we hope that regular sections like Class Acts and Ecologies give you something you can use in your game. We'll continue to publish articles that tie the real world to D&D, but it's not something we'll do every month. In fact, I encourage readers to scour nonfiction books and websites for inspiration for their game. The history of the real world is often far more fascinating than anything cooked up in a fantasy novel. That said, the chief focus of* Dragon *is fantasy, and it will remain so forevermore.*

Winning races will return, infrequently, when we receive appropriate submissions. No use forcing more animal-people on readers until we have something really compelling to offer.

My Purse Be Too Light

With apologies, my unemployment and lack of funds forces me to decline subscription renewal. Though I'll long for yon informative columns and amusing anecdotes, I've not the coin to continue. Be assured I'll seek ye out and return to thine bountiful articles at the earliest opportunity.

Keith Nagai
Torrance, CA

And we'll be here in the darkness waiting for you. You'd better hope you make your Spot check. —Erik Mona

Riddle of the Unicorn

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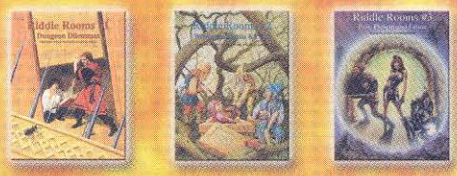


Riddle Rooms

Riddle Rooms are riddles and puzzles presented as rooms that can be added to any dungeon or adventure. Each room has one or more illustrations. Can be used with any system.

Cloud Kingdom Games
This issue's Riddle:

More precious than rubies
And redder than wine.
Everyone needs me,
All of the time.
But when one is murdered,
And lying there slain,
Then you can find me,
Without searching in vein.

Get a new riddle each week in your email. Sign up at:
riddles.CloudKingdom.com
Find the riddle answer in our other ad in this issue

For more riddles and games visit us at
www.CloudKingdom.com/Dragon

by Ari Marmell, Jason Bulmahn, and the DRAGON *staff* • *illustrated by Attila Adorjany*

THE POINT OF POLE ARMS

A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE

The sword and battleaxe are the staple weapons of fantasy. They're effective, but more importantly, they're cool. Almost every great hero carries one.

Historically, however, the pole arm was the dominant weapon type on many a battlefield, and it proved far more common than the sword or axe throughout many cultures and over many centuries. It was easier to make and to learn than the sword, but that's hardly the only reason. When wielded by a skilled combatant, the pole arm is a devastating weapon, one that has advantages over swords and axes under many circumstances. Unfortunately, the D&D rules as written make pole arms a suboptimal choice for anyone with Martial Weapon Proficiency. Presented herein is a range of options designed to make the pole arm specialist a warrior to be feared, someone who stands on equal footing with the most skilled axe-bearing barbarians or sword-wielding knights.

WHAT IS A POLE ARM?

By its simplest definition, a pole arm is any two-handed weapon that consists mostly of a long straight shaft often with a blade, spike, or other attacking implement at either end. Historically, they were most frequently used against horsemen and opponents on higher ground. Many pole arms have reach, but that is not intrinsic to the definition.

POLE ARM DESCRIPTIONS

The weapons found on the Complete Pole Arm Chart are described below along with any special option the wielder ("you") has for their use.

Ankus: The ankus is made up of a long dull hook along with a blunt point attached to a pole. An ankus has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe. You can use an ankus to make trip attacks. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop the ankus to avoid being tripped.

Awl Pike: Built similarly to a longspear, the awl pike is almost 15 feet long. You can strike opponents 15 feet away with it, but you can't use it against foes closer than that. If you use a ready action to set an awl pike against a charge, you deal double damage on a successful hit against a charging character.

Axe, Orc Double: The orc double axe consists of a pair of large double-sided axe heads mounted on both ends of a pole. An orc double axe is a double weapon. You can fight with it as if fighting with two weapons, but if you do, you incur all the normal attack penalties associated with fighting with two weapons, just as if you were using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon. A creature wielding an orc double axe in one hand can't use it as a double weapon—only one end of the weapon can be used in any given round.

Bardiche: This weapon combines a pole with long curving cleaver blade, mounted near the tip. A bardiche is cumbersome and unwieldy but devastating when it strikes.

Bec de Corbin: Also called a "raven's beak," the bec de corbin has both the head of an exceptionally heavy pick and a spear blade. A bec de corbin has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe. If you use a ready action to set a bec de corbin against a charge, you deal double damage on a successful hit against a charging character.

Duom: The duom is a longspear with a standard spearhead, as well as two blades curved so that they point backward along the shaft. The weapon has reach, allowing you to strike opponenets 10 feet away with it. Those proficient with the duom can also attack adjacent foes with the reversed heads using a practiced "reversed strike." Apply a –2 penalty on the attack roll if you use the duom to attack a

COMPLETE POLE ARM CHART

The following pole arms are useful in almost any campaign. All require two hands to wield.

Simple Weapon	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Two-Handed Melee Weapons							
Fauchard[1]	7 gp	1d6	1d8	×3	—	10 lb.	Slashing
Longspear[1,2]	5 gp	1d6	1d8	×3	—	9 lb.	Piercing
Quarterstaff[5]	—	1d4/1d4	1d6/1d6	×2	—	4 lb.	Bludgeoning
Spear[2]	2 gp	1d6	1d8	×3	20 ft.	6 lb.	Piercing

Martial Weapon	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Two-Handed Melee Weapons							
Bardiche	9 gp	1d8	1d10	×3	—	12 lb.	Slashing
Duom[1,6]	20 gp	1d6	1d8	×3	—	8 lb.	Piercing
Glaive[1]	8 gp	1d8	1d10	×3	—	10 lb.	Slashing
Guisarme[1,3]	9 gp	1d6	2d4	×3	—	12 lb.	Slashing
Halberd[2,3]	10 gp	1d8	1d10	×3	—	12 lb.	Piercing or slashing
Lucerne hammer[1]	12 gp	1d6	2d4	×4	—	10 lb.	Bludgeoning or piercing
Naginata[1]	10 gp	1d8	1d10	×3	—	15 lb.	Slashing
Partisan[1]	12 gp	1d6	2d4	×3	—	12 lb.	Piercing or slashing
Pilum[1]	5 gp	1d6	1d8	×3	20 ft.	6 lb.	Piercing
Ranseur[1,4]	10 gp	1d6	2d4	×3	—	12 lb.	Piercing
Spetum[4]	10 gp	1d6	2d4	×3	—	8 lb.	Piercing
Voulge[1]	10 gp	1d8	1d10	×3	—	14 lb.	Slashing

Exotic Weapon	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Two-Handed Melee Weapons							
Ankus[1,3]	15 gp	1d6	2d4	×2	—	15 lb.	Bludgeoning
Awl pike[2,6]	10 gp	1d6	1d8	×3	—	10 lb.	Piercing
Axe, orc double[5]	60 gp	1d6/1d6	1d8/1d8	×3	—	15 lb.	Slashing
Bec de corbin[1,2]	28 gp	1d6	2d4	×4	—	14 lb.	Piercing
Goad[6]	8 gp	1d6	2d4	×2	—	10 lb.	Bludgeoning or piercing
Greatspear[1]	25 gp	1d10	2d6	×3	10 ft.	9 lb.	Piercing
Lochaber axe[1,3]	18 gp	1d8	1d10	×3	—	15 lb.	Slashing
Longstaff[5,6]	15 gp	1d4/1d4	1d6/1d6	×2	—	6 lb.	Bludgeoning
Poleaxe, heavy[1]	20 gp	1d10	2d6	×3	—	15 lb.	Piercing or slashing
Ritiik[6]	5 gp	1d6	1d8	×3	—	6 lb.	Piercing
Sasumata[1,6]	8 gp	1d3[7]	1d4[7]	×2	—	8 lb.	Bludgeoning
Sharrash, Talenta[1,3]	18 gp	1d8	1d10	19–20/×4	—	10 lb.	Slashing
Sodegarami[1,6]	4 gp	1d3	1d4	×2	—	5 lb.	Piercing
Urgrosh, dwarven[2,5]	50 gp	1d6/1d4	1d8/1d6	×3	—	12 lb.	Piercing or slashing
Warpike, dwarven[1,2,3]	45 gp	1d8	2d6	×3	—	15 lb.	Piercing or Slashing

1 *This weapon has reach; you can use it to strike foes 10 feet away, but not adjacent foes.*
2 *This weapon deals double damage when readied against a charge.*
3 *You can use this weapon to make trip attacks. If you are tripped during the attempt, you may drop the weapon to avoid being tripped in return.*
4 *This weapon grants a +2 bonus on disarm attacks.*
5 *Double weapon.*
6 *See the description of this weapon for special rules.*
7 *This weapon deals nonlethal damage.*

second adjacent opponent in the same round you attacked the first opponent.

Fauchard: A simple pole arm with a curved, slashing blade, not unlike a gently curved sickle. A fauchard has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe.

Glaive: The glaive is little more than a single-edged blade at the end of a long pole. A glaive has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe.

Goad: A goad is a long, thin wooden pole mounted with a heavy stone or metal weight and a large spike at one end. Primarily intended as a tool to direct the movement of large animals, a goad makes a solid weapon in a pinch. When you attack with a goad, you must decide if you are attacking with the spike to deal piercing damage or the weight to deal bludgeoning damage. The flexibility of the goad's shaft absorbs much of the force behind blows made with the bludgeoning head, and all bludgeoning damage dealt by a goad is nonlethal as a result. Piercing damage remains lethal.

If you are proficient with its use, the goad grants a +2 circumstance bonus on all Handle Animal checks made against animals of size Huge or larger (such as elephants).

Greatspear: This heavy spear has a broad flat blade. A greatspear has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe.

Guisarme: The guisarme is a curving blade that bends back far enough to form a hook. A guisarme has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe. You can also use it to make trip attacks. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop the guisarme to avoid being tripped.

Halberd: The halberd consists of a curving axe head combined with a long spear tip mounted onto an 8-foot-long pole. If you use a ready action to set a halberd against a charge, you deal double damage on a successful hit against a charging character.

You can use the hook on the back of a halberd to make trip attacks. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop the halberd to avoid being tripped.

Lochaber Axe: An axe-headed weapon with a hook for tripping, the lochaber axe is essentially a larger halberd lacking the top-spike. A lochaber axe has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe.

You can also use a lochaber axe to make trip attacks. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop the lochaber axe to avoid being tripped.

Longspear: At its simplest, a longspear is little more than a sharp pointed blade mounted on the end of a 10-foot-long pole. A longspear has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe. If you use a ready action to set a longspear against a charge, you deal double damage on a successful hit against a charging character.

Longstaff: Longer than a quarterstaff, a longstaff is much more difficult to use, but skilled wielders are better able to protect themselves from multiple attackers when fighting cautiously.

If you are proficient with the longstaff and you fight defensively or employ the total defense combat maneuver, you cannot be flanked for the rest of the round. This benefit also applies if you are proficient in the weapon, have the Combat Expertise feat, and shift at least 2 points of your attack bonus to Armor Class for the round.

The longstaff is a double weapon and a special monk weapon just like the quarterstaff (see that description for details).

Characters proficient with the longstaff can treat it as a quarterstaff for the purposes of the following feats: Greater Weapon Focus, Greater Weapon Specialization, Improved Critical, Weapon Focus, and Weapon Specialization.

Lucerne Hammer: The lucerne hammer is similar to the halberd, but with a longer spike and a smaller three-pronged hammerhead instead of an axe blade. A lucerne hammer has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe.

Naginata: Similar to a fauchard in design, the naginata is a heavy curved blade on the end of a long pole. A naginata has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe.

Partisan: The partisan consists of a central spike with two slashing axelike spikes protruding from the sides of the main blade. A partisan has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe. A partisan is sometimes called a "bohemian ear-spoon."

Pilum: A thin spear, over a foot of its length is metal. A pilum can be used to attack an enemy's shield (and only a shield) as a sunder attempt. This attempt can be made at range. If attempted in melee combat, this draws an attack of opportunity unless you have the Improved Sunder feat. If the pilum deals more damage than the shield's hardness, the spear is stuck in the shield. This deals only 1 point of damage to the shield regardless of how much damage was actually done over the hardness. Removing a pilum takes 2d4 rounds. While the pilum is attached to a shield, the target must drop the shield or suffer a –2 circumstance penalty to Armor Class and on attack rolls and Reflex saves due to the added weight and awkwardness. Obviously, you lose use of the pilum while it is attached in this way.

Poleaxe, Heavy: This weapon has a massive axe blade set onto a long pole. A heavy poleaxe has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe. If you use a ready action to set a heavy poleaxe against a charge, you deal double damage on a successful hit against a charging character.

Quarterstaff: The favored weapon of many common folk, the quarterstaff is a simple 6-foot-long pole. A quarterstaff is a double weapon. You can fight with it as if fighting with two weapons, but if you do, you incur all

the normal attack penalties associated with fighting with two weapons, just as if you were using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon. A creature wielding a quarterstaff in one hand can't use it as a double weapon—only one end of the weapon can be used in any given round.

The quarterstaff is a special monk weapon. This designation gives a monk wielding a quarterstaff special options.

Ranseur: A ranseur consists of a central spike flanked by two smaller prongs and backward-facing hooks. A ranseur has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe. With a ranseur, you get a +2 bonus on opposed attack rolls made to disarm an opponent (including the roll to avoid being disarmed if such an attempt fails).

Ritiik: A ritiik is a spearlike weapon with an additional hooked blade protruding from the base of the spear head. When you successfully hit a target with a ritiik, you can twist the weapon and hook this blade into the target's flesh if the target fails a Reflex saving throw (DC 10 + the damage dealt). If you hook the target, you can immediately make a trip attack against the target. If you fail, you can let go of the ritiik to avoid the retaliatory trip attack.

The damaged creature can pull the ritiik from its wound if it has two free hands and takes a full-round action to do so, but it deals damage to itself equal to the initial damage the ritiik dealt. A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Heal check can remove a ritiik without further damage.

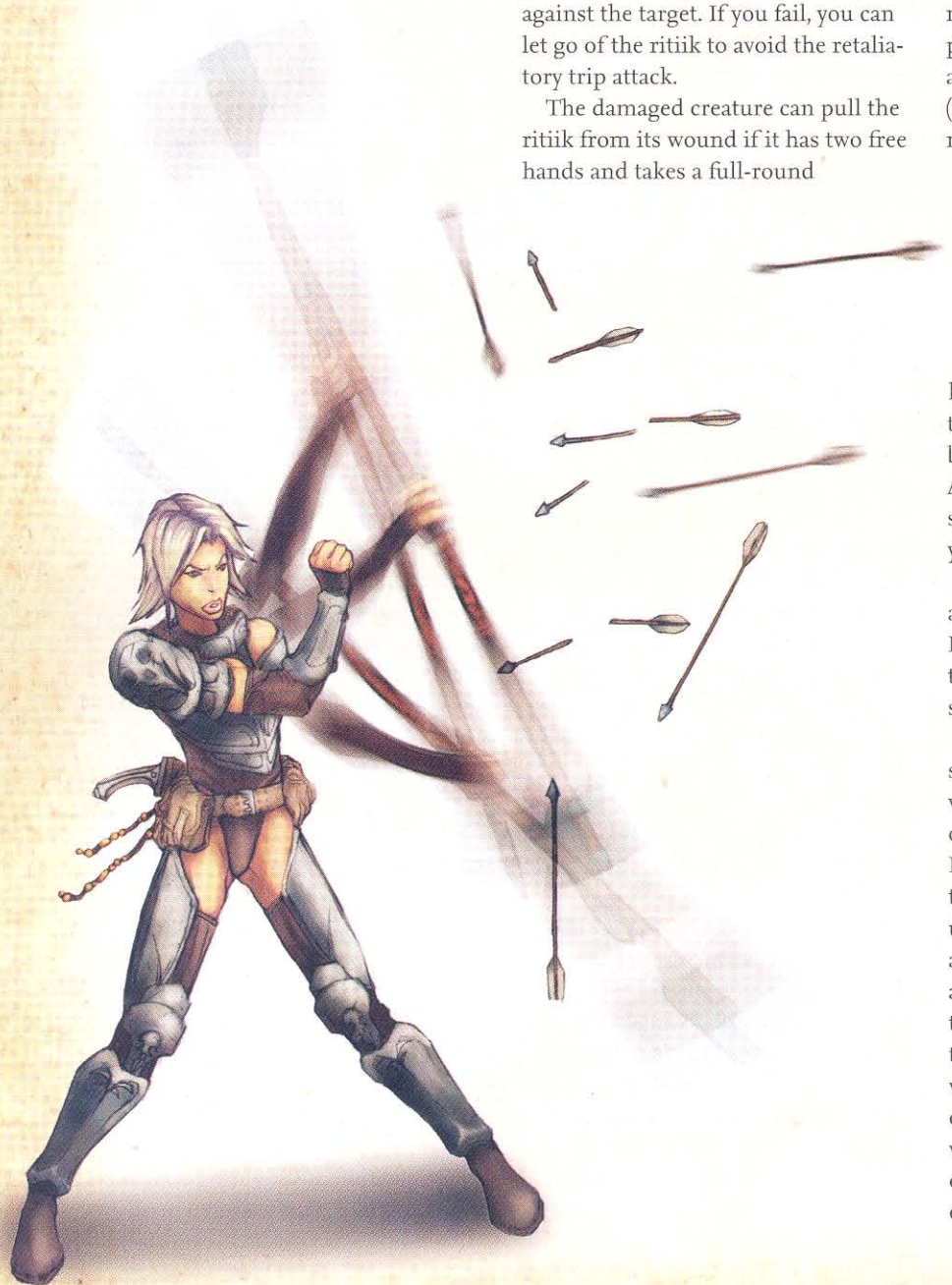
Sasumata: A dull crescent-moon blade placed atop a long pole, the sasumata is a pole arm designed to capture opponents with a minimum of harm. A wielder who hits a Small or Medium opponent with a sasumata can immediately initiate a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. (See Grapple in Chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook* for more information.) In addition to the normal options available to a grappler, the wielder of the sasumata can attempt to pull his target to the ground (the equivalent of a trip attack, though no attack roll is necessary).

A sasumata has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe. A sasumata is also known as a grasping pole in the *Book of Exalted Deeds.*

Sharrash, Talenta: Developed by the halflings of Eberron's Talenta Plains, this weapon consists of a long curved blade mounted at the end of a long pole. A Talenta sharrash has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe.

Due to its curved blade, you can use a Talenta sharrash to make trip attacks. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop the Talenta sharrash to avoid being tripped.

Sodegarami: The sodegarami, or sleeve-tangler, is a highly specialized weapon used to catch and entangle an opponent without causing great harm. It is normally used to hook and catch the clothing of an opponent. When you use a sodegarami in this way, you make a grapple attack without provoking an attack of opportunity. You make a melee touch attack with the weapon to "grab" the target's clothing. This attack does not work against a character in heavy armor, or against most monsters that do not wear clothing. If the touch attack is successful, you make an opposed grapple check with a +4 bonus on the check (you



gain no bonus for your size but still suffer any penalties you might have). If you win the opposed check, you have a hold on the target but do not deal any damage. If you lose, you fail to start a grapple.

To maintain the grapple, you do not need to move into your opponent's space. The sodegarami holds your opponent 10 feet away from you. While you maintain the grapple, you do not have the option to damage or pin your opponent. Your opponent can try to escape or wriggle free, attack with a light weapon, or cast a spell with no somatic components and a casting time of 1 standard action.

A sodegarami can also be used as a normal weapon, dealing damage as shown on the Complete Pole Arm Chart. A sodegarami has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe. The sodegarami is identical to the entangling pole found in the *Book of Exalted Deeds*.

Spear: Shorter than a longspear, the spear's design is essentially the same. A spear can be thrown. If you use a ready action to set a spear against a charge, you deal double damage on a successful hit against a charging character.

Spetum: A spetum is similar to a ranseur but on a shorter pole. With a spetum, you get a +2 bonus on opposed attack rolls made to disarm an opponent (including the roll to avoid being disarmed if such an attempt fails).

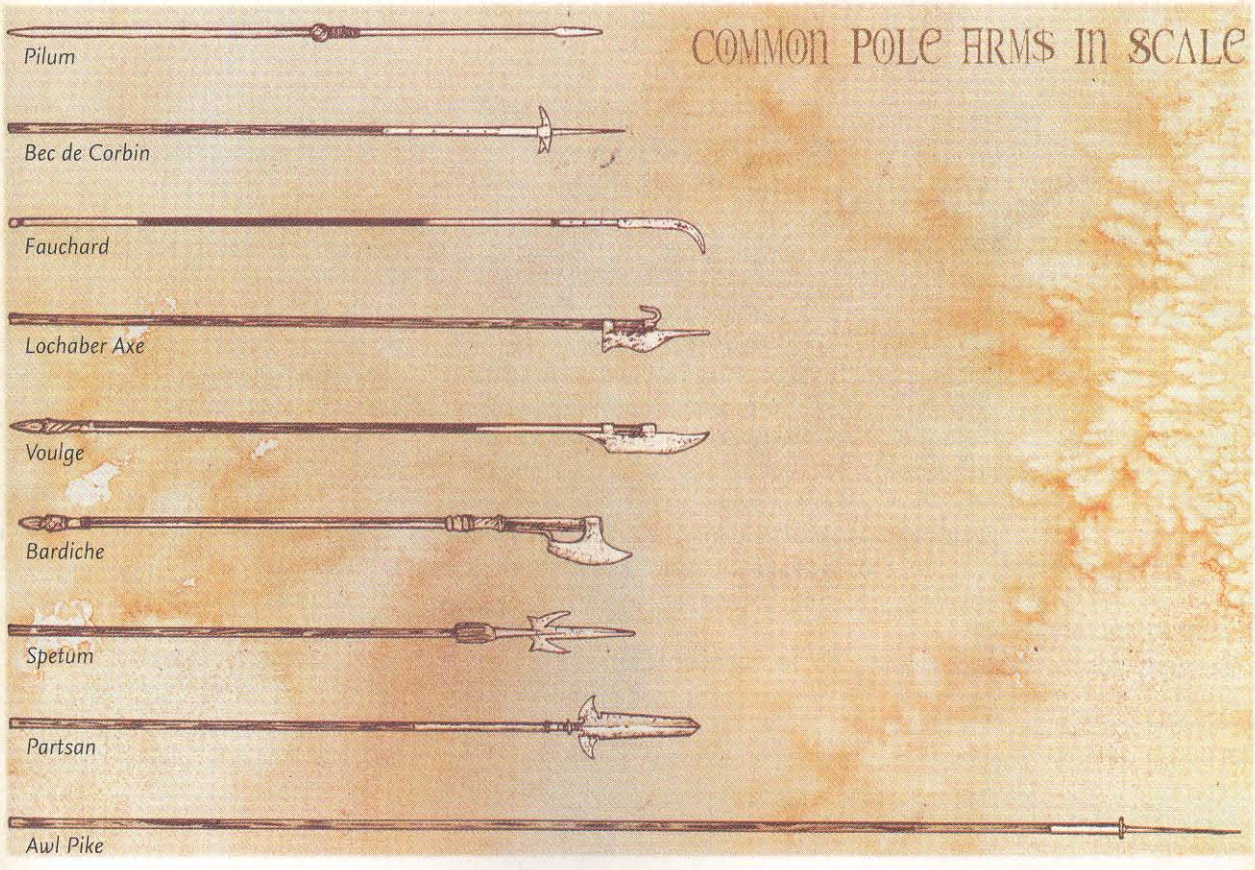
Urgosh, Dwarven: Also known as the spear-axe, this weapon is made up of a spear tip and an axe head mounted on opposite ends of a sturdy pole. You can fight with it as if fighting with two weapons, but if you do, you incur all the normal attack penalties associated with fighting with two weapons, just as if you were using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon. The urgrosh's axe head is a slashing weapon that deals 1d8 points of damage. Its spear head is a piercing weapon that deals 1d6 points of damage. You can use either head as the primary weapon. The other is the off-hand weapon. A creature wielding a dwarven urgrosh in one hand can't use it as a double weapon—only one end of the weapon can be used in any given round.

If you use a ready action to set an urgrosh against a charge, you deal double damage if you score a hit against a charging character. If you use an urgrosh against a charging character, the spear head is the part of the weapon that

OTHER POLE ARMS

A few other sources contain pole arms made specifically by non-humanoid creatures. Check out the following sources for more information.

Book of Vile Darkness: Rutterkin snap-tong.
Planar Handbook: Ramhammer, ripper.
Savage Species: Gythka, notbora, pincer staff, salamander longspear.
Underdark: Pincer staff.



deals damage. Dwarves treat dwarven urgroshes as martial weapons.

Voulge: The voulge is simply a long cleaver blade mounted on the end of a long pole. A voulge has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe.

Warpike, Dwarven: The dwarven warpike resembles a halberd with a greatly elongated shaft, and a counterweight at the other end. A dwarven warpike has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe.

If you use a ready action to set a dwarven warpike against a charge, you deal double damage on a successful hit against a charging character.

You can use the hook on the back of a dwarven warpike to make trip attacks. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop the dwarven warpike to avoid being tripped.

Pole Arm Feats

For the purpose of these feats, a pole arm is any weapon listed on the Complete Pole Arm Chart. Fighters may take any of these feats as bonus feats.

Braced for Charge [General]

When receiving a charge, you know how to strike where it truly hurts.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You can ready an action to set any pole arm against a charge. This attack deals double damage on a successful hit against a charging character. This feat grants no bonus to weapons that already grant double damage when set against a charge.

Normal: Only specific weapons do double damage when readied against a charge.

Haft Strike [General]

You have learned to fight with both ends of a pole arm.

Prerequisite: Two-Weapon Fighting.

Benefit: When wielding a pole arm two-handed you may choose to attack with the haft of the weapon. You may only perform this attack as part of a full-attack action. This additional attack is at your highest attack bonus and deals damage like a club of the same size as the pole arm. Although the haft does not possess any of the bonuses associated with the weapon (such as *flaming*), it does count as magic for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction if the weapon is enchanted. When using this feat, each attack you make in that round (the extra one and the normal ones) suffers a –2 penalty. You only receive half your Strength bonus on damage rolls with this attack. This feat cannot be used with a double weapon.

Normal: The haft of a non-double weapon is considered an improvised weapon and cannot be used as part of a full-attack action.

Long Strike [General]

You have practiced grasping a pole arm farther down the haft than normal, granting you extended reach.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +2.

Benefit: As a full-attack action, you can make one attack with a pole arm as if it had reach, allowing you to strike an opponent 10 feet away. If the pole arm already grants reach, treat its reach as if it extended 5 feet further.

Normal: Only reach weapons allow you to attack foes more than 5 feet away.

Pole Balance [General]

You can use your pole arm to brace yourself against impact and prevent you from falling.

Benefit: When wielding a pole arm two-handed you gain a +4 circumstance bonus to resist being bull rushed or tripped, and on any Balance checks to avoid losing your footing. You may not use this feat if you are flat-footed or if you are in a precarious position (such as on a tightrope or while climbing) that does not provide you a solid surface against which to prop the weapon.

Pole Fighter [General]

Your monastic training included extensive work with pole arms and other similar weapons.

Prerequisite: Proficiency with the selected weapon, Weapon Focus with the selected weapon, flurry of blows class feature.

Benefit: Chose a pole arm from the Complete Pole Arm Chart. You can treat that weapon as a special monk weapon, allowing you to perform a flurry of blows with it.

Shorten Grip [General]

You know how to alter your grip on a reach weapon to use it against nearby opponents.

Benefit: When wielding a pole arm with reach that you are proficient with, you may treat the weapon as if it did not have reach. The weapon is unwieldy when used in this fashion and you suffer a –2 penalty on attack rolls when attacking an opponent you normally could not. You cannot use this feat with the awl pike.

Normal: Reach weapons cannot be used against adjacent foes.

Spinning Defense [General]

You can spin a pole arm around you, deflecting attacks.

Prerequisite: Combat Expertise, Deflect Arrows.

Benefit: While wielding a pole arm during a total defense action, you receive a +1 dodge bonus to your AC (that stacks with the bonuses from total defense) and you can use the Deflect Arrows feat any number of times until your next turn (you do not need an open hand to deflect ranged weapons while using this feat). While using this feat, you cannot catch any of the weapons through the Snatch Arrows feat.

Normal: You can only use the Deflect Arrows feat once per round.

Vault [General]

While wielding a pole arm you can jump great distances.

Prerequisite: Str 13+, Jump 4 ranks.

Benefit: When wielding a pole arm two-handed, the DC for a long jump is reduced by –5. In addition, the DC for a high jump is equal to three times the distance to be cleared. If you jump up to grab something, you must drop the pole arm to grab the target.

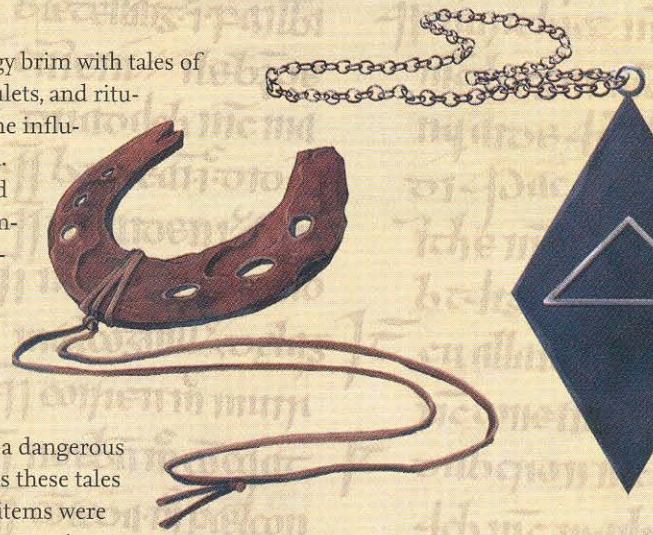
Normal: The DC for a high jump is equal to four times the distance to be cleared.

by Yury Pavlotsky
illustrated by Peter Bergting

Alchemical Charms

Devils, Demons, and Vampires Beware

"A pittance to protect you from evil?"
"I am evil!"
-Subotai and the charm seller, *Conan the Barbarian*



Folklore and mythology brim with tales of charms, philters, amulets, and rituals to help ward off the influence of the supernatural. Garlic, holy symbols, and mirrors help against vampires and wolfsbane protects against werewolves and their ilk. These items warded people against the fear of the unknown and provided a measure of security in a dangerous and mysterious world. As these tales spread, more and more items were added to the list of charms against the supernatural.

In D&D these horrors pose an all-too-real threat to both hearty adventurers and lowly peasants alike. With such monsters lurking about the power to combat evil becomes even more necessary, especially for those who cannot afford magic. Thus, people turn to alchemical and natural charms for aid. From major cities to tiny, isolated villages, the common folk use these items to ward against everything from diseases to devils.

Rules for Vulnerabilities

Alchemical charms are nonmagical items that protect their wearer from certain creatures and creature types. Charms protect the bearer by using a substance that harms or suppresses a creature's power. These creatures are considered vulnerable to the substance. Creatures are vulnerable to any substance that repulses them or bypasses their damage reduction. If multiple substances can overcome a creature's damage reduction, that creature is vulnerable to charms of any material that overcomes its damage reduction—unless both are required to overcome its damage reduction (instead of one or the other). For example, a bearded devil has damage reduction 5/silver or good, making it vulnerable to either silver or good. A more powerful creature like a horned devil, which has damage reduction 10/good and silver, is only vulnerable to a charm that is both good and silver.

Types of Items

These items are divided into two groups: charms and draughts. Small amulets used by common folk to drive off certain creatures, charms are used to perform a touch attack against vulnerable creatures, causing them to burn and blister in response to the contact. They are not considered magical items, however, and thus do not take up an item slot. Charms must be drawn like any other weapon and boil away into nothingness when successfully used.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: VULNERABILITIES

This article presents a straightforward vulnerability system which requires little integration to use with existing monsters. If a monster has the appropriate damage reduction, then it is vulnerable. DMs wishing to add more flavor to their world can assign these vulnerabilities to creatures without damage reduction. For example, cold iron traditionally harms fey, but the weaker varieties lack damage reduction. Feel free to assign the cold iron vulnerability to all fey, or assign one of the existing vulnerabilities to some other creatures. This article only uses substances and properties that already exist in the D&D rules; however, DMs are encouraged to add other vulnerabilities. Simple things like fire, salt, or other exotic components—like the hair of a chimera—can all serve to add a unique flair to the campaign world when used as the basis for charms.

ALCHEMICAL ITEMS

Item	Cost	Weight
Anti-disease tonic	100 gp	—
Charm, axiomatic/anarchic	30 gp	1 lb.
Charm, cold iron	30 gp	1 lb.
Charm, combination	40 gp	1 lb.
Charm, garlic	5 gp	1 lb.
Charm, holy/unholy	30 gp	1 lb.
Charm, silver	30 gp	1 lb.
Draught, axiomatic/anarchic	50 gp	—
Draught, cold iron	75 gp	—
Draught, combination	150 gp	—
Draught, garlic	50 gp	—
Draught, holy/unholy	50 gp	—
Draught, silver	75 gp	—
Wolfsbane	5 gp	—

Alchemical potions, known as droughts, fortify the imbiber against a creature vulnerable to the draught's specific ingredients. Alchemists use a secret process to combine rare metals or liquids with herbs, oils, and other ingredients to create a potent concoction. Once imbibed, the draught lasts for 1 hour and provides the user a +2 alchemical bonus on saves versus the spells and abilities of creatures vulnerable to it. A person can only be under the effect of one draught at a time.

These items are listed below, sorted by material.

Anarchic Charm: The anarchic charm commonly looks like a swirling mass of ribbons tied to a colorful leather cord. An anarchic charm can be used to perform a touch attack against a creature vulnerable to chaos. This touch deals 1d6 points of damage to the creature and destroys the amulet. In addition, the target must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or be shaken for 1d4 rounds.

Anti-disease Tonic: Legends place the tongue of an otyugh on the ingredients list of this alchemical elixir, which fortifies the body to withstand disease. It provides a +5 alchemical bonus on the imbiber's saves against disease for one day.

Axiomatic Charm: The opposite of anarchic charms, axiomatic charms are usually geometric shapes secured to a fine steel chain. An axiomatic charm can be used to perform a touch attack against a creature vulnerable to law. This touch deals 1d6 points of damage to the creature and destroys the amulet. In addition, the target must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or be shaken for 1d4 rounds.

Cold Iron Charm: Cold iron lends itself well to charms and draughts used against fey or demons. Often shaped like a horseshoe, a cold iron charm can be used to perform a touch attack against a creature vulnerable to cold iron. This touch deals 1d6 points of damage to the creature and destroys the amulet. In addition, the target must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or be shaken for 1d4 rounds.

Cold Iron Draught: This elixir combines small amounts of cold iron with

rare herbs and oils. It has a bluish tinge to it and an unpleasant metallic aftertaste. A cold iron draught provides the imbiber a +2 alchemical bonus on saves made against the spells and abilities of creatures vulnerable to cold iron. This effect lasts for 1 hour.

Combination Charm: Charms like silver holy symbols combine the properties of an alchemical metal (silver or cold iron) with the power of an aligned charm (anarchic, axiomatic, holy, or unholy). A combination charm can be used to perform a touch attack against a creature vulnerable to either one or both of the charm's properties. This touch deals 1d6 points of damage to the creature and destroys the amulet. In addition, the target must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or be shaken for 1d4 rounds. The wealthy turn these symbols into elaborate affairs encrusted with jewels and inlaid with gilt runes.

Combination Draught: A potent blend of two draughts, the combination draught provides the best of both worlds, protecting the imbiber against creatures vulnerable to both an alchemical metal (silver or cold iron) and the power of an alignment (anarchic, axiomatic, holy, or unholy). A combination draught provides the imbiber a +2 alchemical bonus on saves made against the spells and abilities of creatures vulnerable to either or both of its components. This effect lasts for 1 hour.

Garlic Charm: The simplest of charms, this item is usually nothing more than a braided strand of garlic bulbs brushed with holy water. It serves as a potent defense against vampires and other creatures repulsed by the herb, making it quite common in areas beset by these undead. A garlic charm can be used to perform a touch attack against a creature repulsed by garlic. This touch deals 1d6 points of damage to the creature and destroys the amulet. In addition, the target must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or be shaken for 1d4 rounds.

Garlic Draught: A flavorful brew of garlic and holy water, the garlic draught provides the repelling power of garlic in liquid form. Although hardly a boon in social situations, it proves itself invaluable when combating vampires. A garlic draught provides the imbiber a +2 alchemical

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bonus on saves made against the spells and abilities of creatures repulsed by garlic. This effect lasts for 1 hour.

Holy Charm: The standard wooden holy symbol of the sort worn by clerics and paladins is also effective against evil creatures such as demons and undead when properly consecrated by one of faith. In addition to serving as a divine focus, a holy charm can be used to perform a touch attack against a creature vulnerable to good. This touch deals 1d6 points of damage to the creature and destroys the symbol. In addition, the target must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or be shaken for 1d4 rounds.

Holy Draught: A mixture of rare herbs and specially prepared holy water, the holy draught serves as a staple for those who battle the undead. It tastes sweet, almost cloyingly so. A holy draught provides the imbiber a +2 alchemical bonus on saves made against the spells and abilities of creatures vulnerable to good. This effect lasts for 1 hour.

Silver Charm: Alchemists use silver in charms and draughts as protection against devils and the like. A silver charm can be used to perform a touch attack against a creature vulnerable to silver. This touch deals 1d6 points of damage to the creature and destroys the amulet. In addition, the target must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or be shaken for 1d4 rounds.

Silver Draught: This swirling mix of silver and rare minerals offers the protection of a silver charm in a draught. Frequently imbibed by lycanthrope hunters, it also protects against weaker devils. A silver draught provides the user a +2 alchemical bonus on saves made against the spells and abilities of creatures vulnerable to silver. It also applies to saves against contracting lycanthropy. This effect lasts for 1 hour.

Unholy Charm: Unholy charms function exactly like holy charms but in reverse, allowing a touch attack against creatures vulnerable to evil. This touch deals 1d6 points of damage to the creature and destroys the amulet. In addition, the target must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or be shaken for 1d4 rounds. Unholy charms are often fashioned as unholy symbols, or sometimes merely as a disturbing image, such as a demonic skull.

Item	Craft Skill	Craft DC
Garlic charm	Alchemy	15
Anarchic charm*, axiomatic charm*, cold iron charm, garlic draught, holy charm*, silver charm, or unholy charm*	Alchemy	20
Anarchic draught*, anti-disease tonic, axiomatic draught*, cold iron draught, combination charm*, holy draught*, silver draught, or unholy draught*	Alchemy	25
Combination draught*	Alchemy	28

*In addition, ingredients for these items must be blessed by a divine spellcaster of the appropriate alignment to function. This involves a simple prayer, not an actual spell.

Unholy Drought: Unholy draughts function exactly like holy droughts but in reverse, granting a +2 alchemical bonus on saves made against the spells and abilities of creatures vulnerable to evil for 1 hour.

Wolfsbane: Also called belladonna, this toxic plant allegedly repels lycanthropes. In addition to its standard effect in curing an afflicted lycanthrope (see lycanthrope in the *Monster Manual*), wolfsbane can also repel a lycanthrope if used as a weapon. Striking a lycanthrope with the plant requires a reasonably fresh sprig (picked within the last week), and a successful touch attack. The creature must then make a DC 12 Will save or flee for 1d4 rounds, as if affected by the spell *cause fear*. A successful use of the plant destroys it.

Crafting Alchemical Items

Creating charms uses the standard Craft rules presented on page 70 of the *Player's Handbook*. The DC for creating the items presented in this article are provided on the included table. Like any alchemical creation, charms require alchemical equipment and a spellcaster to craft. Wolfsbane does not require any alchemical treatments, but the plant must be reasonably fresh to function (picked within the last week). A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or Survival check is required to find and harvest wolfsbane in the wilderness correctly.

Ecology and Society

In a society where alchemical charms exist, people rely on charm sellers to protect them against both real and supposed dangers. Almost every village and hamlet possesses a simple wise-woman or knowledgeable hermit, an elder versed in the use of charms and amulets. A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (religion), or bardic knowledge check reveals the properties of the common, nonmagical charms. The typical village alchemist has ranks in one or more of these skills, and perhaps some Craft (alchemy) ranks to create the items, although that role might rest with a separate, regional alchemist.

Nearly every charm peddler in any fantasy city sells common charms. In addition, temples commonly sell holy symbols as a means to protect people from evil. More obscure charms and magic versions of common charms usually remain out of reach for all but the rich and powerful. While sages and nobles publicly scoff at the public use of charms, quite a few privately acknowledge some value to this practice.

Let the style of your campaign determine how practitioners of divine magic see these items. In some worlds, clerics view these items as beneficial, driving away evil and other dangerous creatures. However, these items infringe on religions' traditional role of protecting the people, and as such some religions might view charms as a form of competition.

by Frank Brunner • illustrated by Marc Sasso & Chris Trevas

FAST, FURIOUS, AND FANTASTICAL

NEW MAGIC VEHICLES

Whether your campaign features the lightning rails of EBERRON's House Orien, the war sloops of GREYHAWK's Scarlet Brotherhood, or simply the ubiquitous carriage and wagon common to nearly every fantasy setting, the potential for high-velocity excitement is always present in DUNGEONS & DRAGONS. Detailed here are eleven wondrous conveyances, each of them tricked out, suped up, and ready to drive into your campaign. The *Arms and Equipment Guide* lists detailed rules for fighting on a moving vehicle, driving through hazards, and repairing vehicles, but if you do not have access to that text, fear not: the standard combat rules are more than sufficient for staging action-packed chase sequences.

WONDROUS CONVEYANCES

Adamantine Carriage: Built to transport dignitaries through potentially hostile urban streets, these carriages are reinforced with adamantine, giving the carriage 40 hp and hardness 20. The carriage is drawn by two heavy horses and travels at a speed of 30 feet when fully loaded, 40 feet when empty.

Price 15,500 gp.

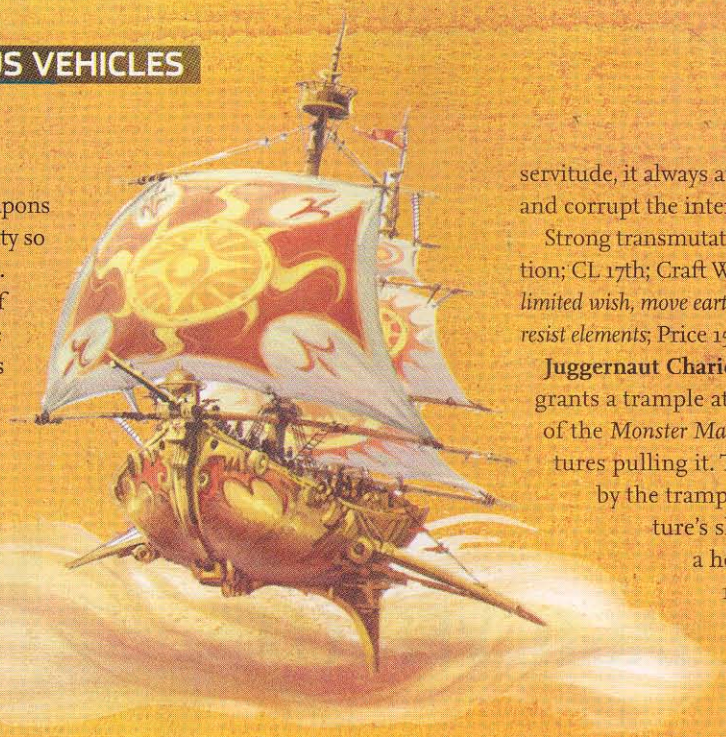
Some adamantine carriages are made to protect their passengers from divination spells as per the *nondetection* spell (DC 16 to break through).

Faint abjuration; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *nondetection*; Price 45,500.

Beholder Globe: A deranged gnome necromancer created the first *beholder globe* from a hollowed out and preserved eye tyrant corpse. One Medium creature or two Small creatures can fit inside one of these preserved husks. The central eye is replaced by hardened glass so that the pilot can see. Outside viewers looking at the bizarre globe can likewise see through the central eye window to the pilot operating the orb inside. By squeezing and twisting the bulbs of the various eyestalk roots, the pilot can fire an eye ray as a standard action and fly the globe at a speed of 15 feet (good) as a move action. The eye rays have a range of 60 feet and a save DC of 15. The rays are identical to a live beholder's rays, although only the following rays still function in a *beholder globe*: *inflict moderate wounds, sleep, slow,* and *telekinesis.* Alchemically treated and innately sturdy, a *beholder globe* retains much of its natural armor. It possesses AC 20, 65 hp, and a hardness of 10. The globe is not watertight or airtight, although those inside do benefit from improved cover (page 152 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Moderate necromancy and enchantment; CL 11th; Craft Wondrous Item, *inflict moderate wounds, sleep, slow, telekinesis, gentle repose*; Price 120,000 gp.

Chariot of Sustarre: Normally this item is nothing more than a weathered sandstone trinket carved to resemble a chariot, but when activated, it explodes with a clap of thunder, summoning a flying chariot made of pure flame and a pair of fiery horses. The summoner and up to five other Medium creatures of his choice may board the chariot and are immune



to fire damage for as long as they remain aboard. In addition, all weapons gain the flaming burst special ability so long as their wielders are on board. All other creatures within 10 feet of the chariot suffer 1d6 points of fire damage per round. The chariot has a fly speed of 100 feet (perfect) and an overland speed of 42 miles per hour. After 12 hours, the *chariot of Sustarre* reverts to its trinket form and cannot be activated again for one week. If the summoner wishes, he may end the chariot's duration early and detonate the vehicle as a *delayed blast fireball* (dealing 13d6 fire damage with a DC 20 Reflex save to halve this damage). This causes the chariot to revert back to trinket form as if its full 12-hour duration had expired. The chariot is otherwise identical to a standard double chariot, except that it can carry six people comfortably and both chariot and horses, being made of pure flame, are immune to weapon damage.

Strong conjuration and evocation; CL 13th; Craft Wondrous Item, *delayed blast fireball, protection from energy, wind walk*; Price 80,000 gp.

Dragonfly Longship: Four gossamer wings spread from the sides of this elegant longship. The aft trails a 60-foot-long iridescent blue tail that terminates in a black bulb. Kings covet these fast and agile ships for their ability to scout and patrol borders. A *dragonfly longship* has a fly speed of 60 feet (average) and an overland speed of 30 miles per hour. The tail bulb constantly secretes acidic goo, and once every 1d4 rounds the tail can convulse and fling a ball of acid. Only the vessel's captain or his designated gunner may direct the tail to attack, and doing so is a standard action. The goo sphere has a range of 200 feet and explodes into a 10-foot-radius burst, dealing 8d6 points of acid damage. A successful DC 15 Reflex save halves this damage. A creature that fails its save suffers 1d6 points of acid damage on each of the following 3 rounds unless it uses a standard action to rinse off the acid.

Strong transmutation and evocation; CL 17th; Craft Wondrous Item, *fly, limited wish, Melf's acid arrow*; Price 175,000 gp.

Dune Yacht: A caliph who possesses a *dune yacht* has no need for a desert stronghold, as his vessel serves as a formidable mobile base of operations. Rigged with sails emblazoned with flames and bright sun motifs, this galley sails over sand instead of water. If removed from sand it is unable to move under its own power, just as if a sea-going vessel ran aground. *Dune yachts* are stronger than average waterborne galleys, possessing 120 hp and hardness 8 per 10-foot section of hull. The yacht itself has fire resistance 5 and it grants this protection to all those aboard. Furthermore, every passenger need consume only half the normal amount of water while on board. Finally, an efreeti is bound to the helm of every *dune yacht*. Once per week, the efreeti can be called forth to serve the captain of the yacht. The efreeti understands and follows the captain's orders for 1 hour before departing. If the efreeti is ever forced to grant a *wish*, the *dune yacht* burns to the keel and the efreeti is freed from its bondage after it grants the *wish*. Note that because of the efreeti's hatred of servitude, it always attempts to twist and corrupt the intent of the wish.

Strong transmutation and conjuration; CL 17th; Craft Wondrous Item, *limited wish, move earth, planar binding, resist elements*; Price 150,000 gp.

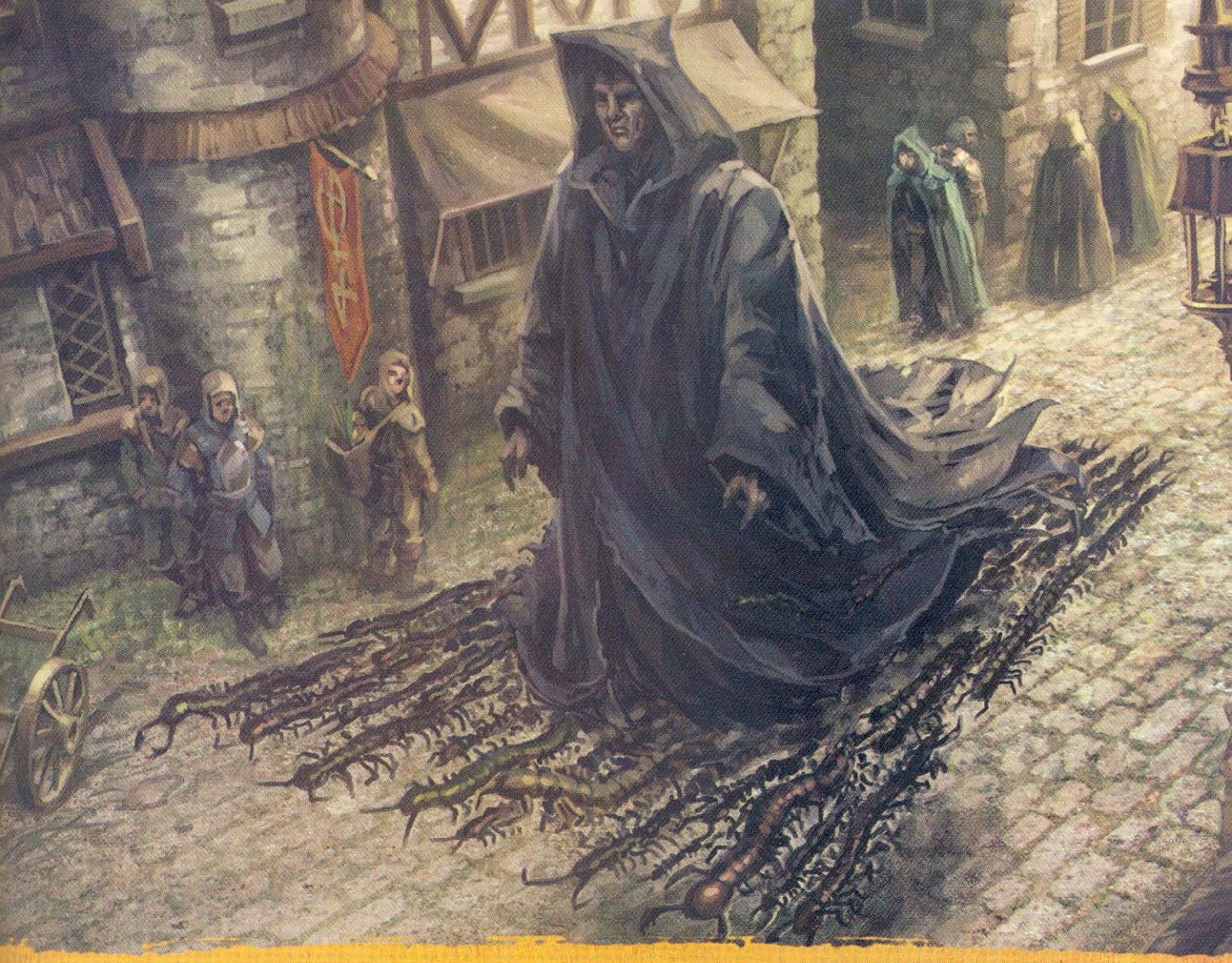
Juggernaut Chariot: This chariot grants a trample attack (see page 316 of the *Monster Manual*) to the creatures pulling it. The damage done by the trample equals the creature's slam attack (usually a hoof for horses) + 1-1/2 times their Strength modifier. The chariot is otherwise identical to the double chariot listed in the *Arms and Equipment Guide*.

Moderate transmutation; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *bull's Strength*; Price 10,000 gp.

Longship of Dread Shade: This floating derelict shows signs of extensive decay, with rotting floorboards and gaping holes in its hull. Despite its appearance it is seaworthy, and during the day it performs just as any other longship. At night, the *longship of dread shade* gains a fly speed of 40 feet and generates 20 zombies or skeletons for a crew, 2 wight lieutenants, and a spectre first mate. All undead are initially under the command of the captain, and they have turn resistance +6 as long as they remain aboard. If the undead crew do not slay at least one living creature each night, the captain must succeed at a Diplomacy check (DC 15 plus the number of nights since the last kill) or face a mutiny. Any remaining undead disappear at sunrise. A full complement of undead rises each sunset, even if some were destroyed the preceding night. Assuming the captaincy of a *longship of dread shade* can have serious alignment repercussions. Each night the crew is allowed to kill, the captain's alignment shifts one step closer to evil.

Strong necromancy; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, *animate dead, create greater undead, fly*; Price 175,000 gp.

Palanquin of Beguilement: A noble can recline on this curtained litter



and be carried through the city by four servants. Anyone relaxing on a *palanquin of beguilement* with a full complement of four bearers gains a +4 enhancement bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks.

Faint enchantment; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *eagle's splendor*; Price 4,800 gp.

Smuggler's Wagon: This rustic transport cart is the bane of taxmen and border guards everywhere. Permanent illusions cause the cart's carrying bed to appear empty even when it contains contraband, refugees, or any other kind of cargo. Someone who actually climbs into the wagon and interacts with the dweomered area gets to make a DC 18 Will save to pierce the illusion. The wagon is further enchanted with *Nystul's magic aura* so that it does not detect as magical. It is otherwise identical to the wagon presented in the *Arms and Equipment Guide*.

None; CL 13th; Craft Wondrous Item, *major image, Nystul's magic aura, veil*; Price 32,000 gp.

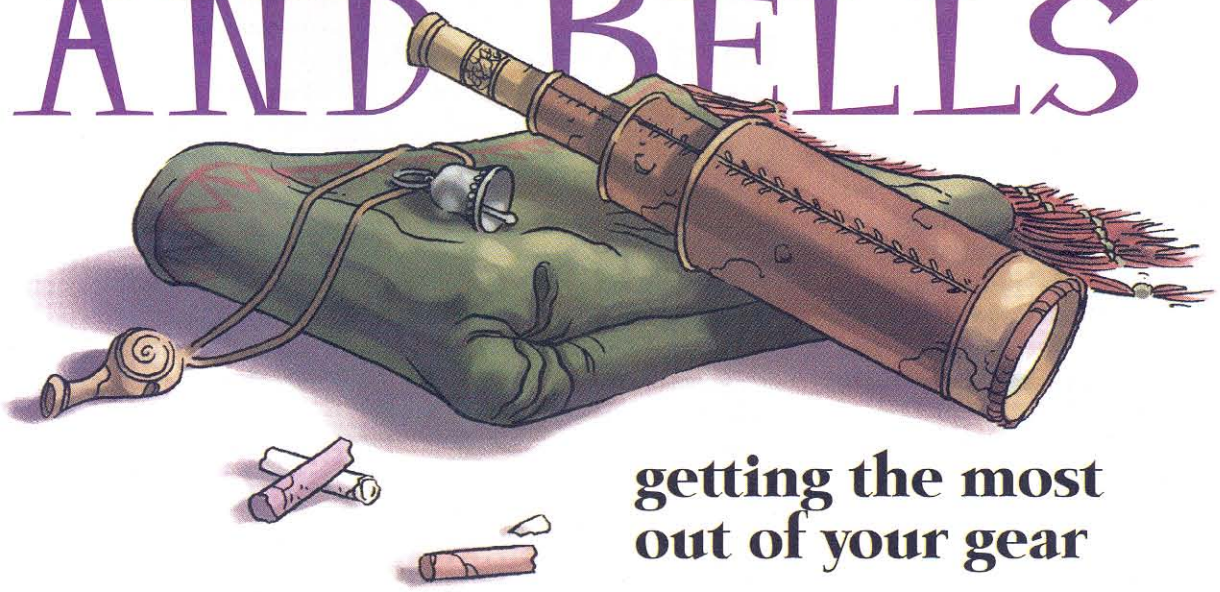
Sniper's Carriage: This enclosed brougham carriage has two arrow slits on each side and a hollow passenger compartment that accommodates two standing archers. The archers gain improved cover against anyone outside the wagon. Furthermore, the carriage is enchanted so that its archers ignore the first two range increment penalties for their weapons. After the second range increment, range penalties apply normally. Moderate divination; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*; Price 16,000 gp.

Worm Raft: This floating raft is nothing more than a roiling bed of grubs, caterpillars, and worms each the size of a grown man's arm that magically maintain the shape of a 10-foot-by-10-foot flatbed raft that can support up to 500 pounds. This disgusting vehicle travels at a speed of 30 feet per round, floating roughly 3 feet above the ground at all times and remains level. The raft is directed by spoken command. Like a *carpet of flying*, as long as the speaker is within voice range the raft obeys, whether the speaker is standing on the raft or not. In addition to directional movement, the raft can be commanded to disperse into swarm form once per day. In swarm form, it cannot carry anything and ceases to act as a vehicle, but it gains all the properties of a centipede swarm (see page 2238 of the *Monster Manual*). The raft can remain in this form for up to 1 hour before returning to raft form. In raft form, the vermin vehicle has 31 hp, but gains hardness 10. If killed in either form, the raft is destroyed. The raft heals 4 hp per day until it reaches its maximum of 31 hp.

Strong conjuration, CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *insect plague*; Price 20,000 gp.

by Mike Mearls • illustrated by Ramón Pérez

BEDROLLS, BOTTLES, AND BELLS



getting the most out of your gear

Many players overlook the hidden potential in tools such as a 10-foot pole, a pair of pitons, or similar items from the adventuring gear portion of the equipment lists. In a game where *+3 flaming greatswords* and *robes of the archmagi* are treasured goods, it's sometimes hard to find a place for the simple, mundane equipment that an adventurer carries into a dungeon. This article presents new rules and uses for some of the most overlooked items listed in the *Player's Handbook*. While a signal whistle might never match a *cloak of the bat* for power and utility, in the right situation it might just save your life.

BEDROLL

A basic piece of equipment for most travelers, a bedroll might also serve as a useful distraction against your opponents.

False Bedroll: When camping, filling a bedroll with leaves, pillows, or blankets might make it appear occupied. If a monster attacks your camp, it might mistakenly pounce upon the bedroll. This ruse requires you to make a Disguise check opposed by the Spot checks of the opponents. Success means that enemies believe the bedroll to be occupied. As soon as a creature attacks or disturbs the bedroll it realizes that it has been tricked. Creatures with the scent special quality receive a +4 circumstance bonus on Spot checks to sniff out this trick.

Smother Flames: A moistened bedroll can be used to smother a small campfire as a full-round action. It might also be used to help put out a creature that is on fire. With a bedroll in hand, you can take a standard action to assist an adjacent creature in extinguishing the flames. Assisting in this way gives the creature a +4 circumstance bonus on Reflex saves to extinguish the flames. Any bedroll used in this way has a 50% chance of being destroyed (taking one round to soak the bedroll with water from a stream or waterskin reduces this chance to 25%).

BELL

If you are attacked at night, a bell can serve to wake your allies or function as a simple alarm.

Awaken Friends: Using a standard action to ring a bell, all of your allies can make DC 0 Listen checks to wake up. Remember to modify the DC for doors, walls, distance, being asleep (a –10 penalty), and other factors.

Ringing Trap: You can set a bell to ring when a door opens, a tripwire breaks, or when an opponent otherwise sets off some sort of trap or lever. You must make a DC 15

Craft (trapmaking) check to set this trap. The trap takes 1 minute to set up per 5-foot square that contains a trigger. The Listen DC to wake up from this trap being sprung is the same as listed above under awaken friends.

Alarm Bell Trap: CR 0; mechanical; touch trigger; no reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; bell rings for one round; Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 20. *Market Price:* 1 gp + 1 sp per 5-foot square containing a trigger.

Blanket, Winter

A thick blanket can keep you warm, but it might also serve as a useful tool in other situations.

Conceal Trap: Place a blanket over a small hole, anchor it in place, cover it with dirt and debris, and you have a quick and simple trap. Opponents must make a Spot check versus your Disguise check to notice the hidden pit. Creatures that do not notice the trap and enter that square must make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid falling into the pit. Note that a blanket cannot cover a pit wider than a single 5-foot square. For each square beyond the first you try to cover, such as with a larger blanket or tarp, your Disguise check suffers a –5 penalty. A creature whose size is larger than the pit does not risk falling into it.

Smother Flames: A blanket can be used in the same way as a bedroll to extinguish flames.

Block and Tackle

A block and tackle consists of a length of rope and two or more pulleys. They make it easier to lift a heavy weight, providing that you have the time to set up the rig. In essence, you mount a pulley on the object you want to move and run a rope through the pulley. You anchor one end of the rope and run the second one through another pulley. You can then pull on the loose end of the rope to move the object. Each length of rope—the anchored end and the one that runs through the pulley—bears half the object's weight. Thus, the object is much easier to lift if you tug on the loose end of the rope, effectively making it so that you only need to lift half the object's weight.

Setting up a block and tackle takes 10 minutes and a DC 10 Use Rope check. If you succeed, count only half the object's weight for the purpose of lifting it. For an object without a listed weight, you gain a +5 competence bonus on your Strength check to move it. A block and tackle is most often used to open a rusted portcullis, lift a large stone lid, or move a laden treasure check.

Bottle, Wine, Glass

A bottle might not be the best way to carry water or wine during an adventure, as a waterskin is far more durable. However, a bottle makes for a useful (if unconventional) weapon.

Improvised Weapon: You can use a wine bottle as an improvised weapon by grasping its long neck and hitting your opponent with the thicker end. You suffer a –4 penalty on your attack roll and the bottle deals 1d4 points of bludgeoning damage. This causes the bottle to shatter, ruining it as a weapon and spilling any liquid the bottle contains over the target.

Quick Caltrops: A broken bottle in a single 5-foot square can act as a substitute for caltrops in a pinch. Setting up such a hazard is a standard action. A broken bottle works in the same way as normal caltrops with the following exceptions. The attack roll made against creatures in the square is at a –5 base attack bonus. The Heal check to treat the wounds from a broken bottle is only DC 10.

Chain

A chain might seem too heavy and unwieldy to justify carrying one, but it can prove useful when dealing with captives who are too large for manacles.

Binding Chains: You can loop chains around a captive's arms and legs to tie him up. You suffer a –2 penalty on your Use Rope check to bind him, but chains are obviously much more difficult to burst than rope. Include a lock and the chain cannot be simply untied.

Improvised Weapon: You can use a chain as an improvised weapon that has reach (page 113 of the *Player's Handbook*). Treat it as a two-handed improvised weapon. Unless the chain was specifically made for small folk, it deals 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage. You suffer a –4 penalty on attack rolls when wielding a chain in this fashion.

Chalk

Useful for scribing messages, chalk also helps you navigate mazes and mark your way through subterranean passages. You can leave symbols behind on doors to note the location of traps or mark areas that you have already visited.

Mark the Path: If you leave a mark in chalk within a dungeon or other location where you can scribe legible symbols, you gain a +2 competence bonus on all Survival checks to avoid becoming lost. This bonus does not extend to new areas that you have not marked. This trick fails to work in places that lack a surface suitable for chalking. You must use a standard action every 50 feet you travel to maintain your marks. You lose this benefit if you stop leaving your marks behind, unless you are in an area you have already marked.

Mirror, Small Steel

Many times, it helps to peek around a corner without exposing yourself to the horrors that lurk around it.

Peek Around Corners: You can use a mirror to look around a corner. You gain full cover, but suffer a –2 penalty on all Spot checks to see through the mirror. In addition, double the distance to an object when you look through a mirror for purposes of Spot checks. You cannot target spells using a mirror in this way.

Signal: A mirror can be used to signal others at a distance without making noise. To use a mirror in this way you must succeed at a ranged touch attack. If your target is still and waiting for the signal, he can drop his AC to 5 for this purpose. You must have a bright light source available for this trick to work (most commonly sunlight). The light reflected in this manner has a range of 500 feet with no maximum number of

range increments (although you must be able to see your target and the light must be strong enough to reach it).

Oil

Commonly used in lanterns and occasionally as a weapon, oil has other uses as well.

Molotov Cocktail: As noted in the *Player's Handbook*, oil can be used in a manner similar to alchemist's fire. Although it takes longer to set up and there is only a 50% chance of it working properly, a flask of oil costs significantly less than its more reliable alternative.

Slippery Floor: You can, as a standard action, pour a flask of oil on the ground, creating a slippery surface. This increases the DC for all Tumble skill checks through the area by +2 (or up to as much as +5 if the surface is extremely smooth). As an added bonus, the oil can later be lit on fire, burning for 2 rounds, and dealing 1d3 points of fire damage to each creature in the area. This effect might not work on some surfaces, such as very uneven ones or those that might absorb the oil.

Paper

Scraps of paper or parchment might seem useless, but there are plenty of times when a simple message could make things easier for you. Your DM might allow you to take notes or sketch diagrams for other PCs only if your character carries paper and a writing implement.

Coded Notes: You can create a simple cipher for the party and your allies, allowing you to leave notes for your friends without revealing sensitive information. This code could use innocent words to mark important items, or you might use simple pictures to indicate key phrases or plans. Make a Bluff check to create a code. The result is the Sense Motive or Decipher Script DC needed to crack your code. Your allies can read the note with a simple DC 5 Intelligence check if you explain the code to them. Otherwise, they too must make Sense Motive or Decipher Script checks.

Rubbings: You can press a piece of paper against a set of faint markings, such as runes or an ancient inscription, and rub a piece of chalk or a similar writing implement to create a simple copy of them. With a successful DC 15 Forgery check you can create an exact duplicate of the marks for later translation.

Piton

In addition to making climbing easier you can also use pitons to spike doors shut, disable a trap, or as an impromptu weapon.

Disable a Trap: When dealing with a mechanical trap that relies on a pressure plate or trap door, using a piton reduces your penalty for not having proper thieves' tools to –1. Using a piton with

proper thieves' tools provides no additional bonus. Your DM might rule that a piton provides this bonus to other mechanical traps as well.

Improvised Weapon: A piton can be used as an improvised weapon. Treat it as a dagger without a range increment. As an improvised weapon, you suffer a –4 penalty on attack rolls when using a piton in this fashion.

Spike Door: You can hammer a piton into a door's frame to keep it open or shut. A piton hammered into the floor in front of a closed door makes it difficult to open, as the door hits the piton when you try to swing it open. To keep a door open, you can hammer a piton between the open door and its frame. When the door swings shut, it hits the piton and remains propped open. You must make a DC 10 Strength check to brace a door in this manner as a full-round action. A closed door's break DC increases by 2 when you spike it shut, while forcing an open door to close requires a DC 20 Strength check.

Pole, 10-foot

Long, unwieldy, and heavy, a 10-foot pole might seem little more than a burden. However, this deceptively useful item can help you deal with anything that you want to keep at arm's reach. Sometimes, probing ahead with the pole can uncover traps, reveal illusions, or alert you to a danger that you might otherwise bungle into.

Probing Search: You can use the pole to examine a dangerous spot or an area that you could not otherwise reach. You suffer a –4 penalty on your Search check, as the pole is an awkward, imprecise tool, but you can stand up to 10 feet away from the place you want to Search. This might allow you to avoid a trap's effects or reach into holes or pits that are otherwise inaccessible. Your DM might rule that a pole cannot be used in this way on some objects.

Rations, Trail

Obviously, an adventurer needs fresh food and water to survive, but a meal can prove useful beyond providing basic sustenance.

Bait Trap: A tasty treat might convince an animal to ignore the trap you've set. Any creature with an Intelligence of 3 or lower suffers a –2 penalty on all Search checks, to AC versus the trap's attack, and on saves made against a trap if you bait it with food the creature finds appetizing.

Bribe Animal: Many wild animals and magical beasts that you encounter are merely looking for a meal. By offering a wolf or a bear your rations, you might be able to sate its hunger and convince it to leave you alone. A druid or ranger gains a +2 competence bonus on wild empathy checks if she offers an animal enough food for a single meal. Your DM might rule that a sufficiently hungry animal must make a DC 10 Will save to avoid spending an action eating any food you throw to it in battle. A trained animal or one that you have already injured automatically ignores the food.

Rope

Almost every adventurer carries a coil of rope and for a good reason. Not only is a rope invaluable for many dungeon hazards it can also be used as a trap.

Trip Line: If you leave a rope across a passage, most of the time an opponent can step over it. However, anyone in a rush to move down the hall might miss it and trip. When you set up a rope in this manner, make a Use Rope check. Any opponent who runs or charges past a trip line must make a DC 10 Spot check. If this check fails, the target must make a Strength or Dexterity check (target's choice) against your Use Rope check. Targets receive a +4 bonus per size category above Medium. If this check also fails, the creature falls prone in the rope's space and its movement ends. Creatures smaller than size Small are usually immune to this attack, unless you have a thin rope and specifically set it up to catch them. In that case, larger creatures ignore the rope.

You can also set up a rope to trip someone as you pull the rope taut. As your foe charges or runs past the rope, you yank it so that it rises off the ground and tangles the foe's feet. In this case, you must ready an action to pull the rope as a foe passes. Your foe gets a DC 15 Spot check to notice the rope and avoid the trap. If your foe runs into the trap make a Strength check opposed by your opponent's Strength or Dexterity check (his choice). Your foe gains a +4 bonus per size category above Medium. As noted above, creatures size Small or smaller are usually immune to this attack unless you specifically choose a thin line that could entangle them. Multiple allies can help you with this check if they, too, ready actions to trip your foe. Each ally assisting in this way must make a DC 10 Strength check. For each ally that succeeds, you get a +2 bonus on your Strength check.

Signal Whistle

A whistle is an easy way to draw your friends' attention. You can use whistles in a manner similar to a bell to alert sleeping friends.

Whistling in the Dark: You can buy several whistles, each with a different tone, so that each member of the party has a distinct signal. If you are lost in the dark or a thick fog, you can use the whistles to keep track of each other. While this tactic also reveals your position to your enemies, it might be a better option than splitting up the party. A successful DC 0 Listen check allows you to determine a whistler's relative direction and distance. Remember to modify the DC for doors, walls, distance, being asleep, and other factors.

Spyglass

While expensive, a spyglass can prove useful in wilderness or nautical adventures. While using a spyglass, reduce the distance to an object or location by half for purposes of making Spot checks. Obviously, this provides a tremendous benefit when looking at objects in the distance.

Start a Fire: While in bright sunlight a spyglass can be used to start a small fire or light a torch when flint and steel is not available. This process takes one full minute.

by Hal Maclean
illustrated by Peter Bergting

THE PLUNDERER'S HANDBOOK

A GUIDE TO FINDING AND KEEPING TREASURE

The lust for treasure, whether beautiful baubles, items of eldritch power, or precious gold, ignites the hearts of all adventurers. This fire, whether the raging inferno within a grasping rogue or the tiny spark found within even the most altruistic paladin, drives them to take staggering risks, endure unimaginable trials, and brave the unknown time and time again. Yet chalking up this desire to simple, callous greed does a disservice to that money-minded breed of adventurer known as the treasure hunter.

Monsters and villains hoard treasure, usually stealing these valuables from the bodies of their victims. More rarely they come by their wealth honestly, but even then they often plan to use it to inflict misery and suffering upon the world. Treasure hunters battle their way into the lairs of such monstrosities, hopefully destroying them, but at the very least liberating their valuables for less dangerous distribution.

This article explores the art of treasure hunting, offering advice and ideas to overcome the three most common dilemmas adventurous pilferers face: How to maximize income gained from a successful adventure, how to get newly found wealth home, and how to keep treasure safe.

Leave No Stone Unturned

Every treasure hunter should keep one primary objective in mind while exploring: to squeeze every last copper out of an adventuring site. While treasure hunting you should keep in mind several tips to assure that your mark is picked as cleanly as possible.

Make it Safe

The typical dungeon brims with untold threats and countless dangers: defeating guards and their masters, disarming traps, navigating treacherous obstacles, and all the other hazards adventurers might face. Such distractions often hinder a treasure hunter attempting to thoroughly search for or keenly appraise potential treasures. Thus, the first step to a successful treasure hunt is to make the surrounding area safe for exploration before gathering up even the most obvious treasure. Magic items, artwork, coins, gems, and anything else striking your fancy could all prove to be triggers for untold threats. Thus, a treasure hunter should check conspicuous treasure for traps, after which the search for a dungeon's hidden wealth may begin.

Interrogate Witnesses

Most creatures make some effort to keep the items they cherish out of the hands of others, but the strategies they employ depend on their cunning and resources. Some might simply bury their treasure, while others might disguise it with illusions deep within elaborate puzzle mazes. All of these approaches suffer from one significant weakness. Somewhere along the line they invariably leave a witness to the loot's location.

Such a witness might prove even more valuable than a dozen successful Search checks. Even if they only provide a single piece of the puzzle, witnesses push you one step closer to uncovering treasure someone believed valuable enough to hide. While interrogating a witness might only reveal a clue to a treasure's location, even the most innocuous detail should not be overlooked.

Start by interrogating captured minions and other defeated foes. Treasure hunters should always take prisoners, whether for ransom, bounty, or the information they possess. While the Intimidate and Bluff skills often prove quite useful in such situations, never forget your magical resources. Even at low levels, spells such as *charm person*, *detect thoughts*, and *zone of truth* usually provide all the information you need. Alternatively, more powerful spells like *dominate person* or *lesser geas* might gain a subject's complete cooperation. Sometimes giving a subject a cursed item like a *ring of clumsiness*, *stone of weight*, or even a *periapt of foul rotting* and offering to remove the curse if he cooperates might prove particularly effective at loosening a henchman's tongue. With greater resources available, use fact checking magic like *commune* or *legend lore* to demonstrate that lying serves no purpose. *Planar ally* and its variants might also allow you to conjure monsters to do your interrogation for you. For instance, a leonal guardinal possesses the ability to read the minds of those around it.

From there, spend some time questioning any innocents and non-combatants found within the dungeon. Liberated prisoners often turn out to be fonts of useful information, passing on snatches of overheard conversation or relaying

THE TIGHTWAD'S TOOLBOX

The right gear often spells the difference between dizzying success and potentially fatal failure. While by no means inclusive, four types of equipment should be considered whenever you go treasure hunting. Despite their usefulness, these items might prove burdensome if carried throughout an entire adventure. If possible, stash them somewhere nearby and retrieve them once you secure the area you're searching.

Evaluation Gear: Accurately cataloging the treasure you discover sometimes turns into a real headache. Including equipment like merchant's scales, a magnifying glass, and similar gear helps a great deal with Appraise checks. Also consider more esoteric equipment that might prove useful in determining more about an item than merely its value. For example, arcane or historical books might help with Knowledge checks made to identify strange glyphs. Fortunately, this equipment can often be left behind if you're willing to drag mysterious treasures back home with you.

Extraction Gear: Sometimes the most valuable items in a dungeon might be found on, or even within, one of your slain foes. A selection of tools like pliers, butcher's knives, and saws, all to remove monster bits you might resell, allows you to make sure nothing of value gets left behind. Don't forget to include some jars of formaldehyde or a similar preservative to ensure that perishable parts make it to market. For more information on such grim yet profitable opportunities, see the article "Using Power Components" in DRAGON #317.

Magic Gear: Perhaps the most useful magic item to any dungeon pilferer, a *rod of metal and mineral detection* is perfectly specialized to all forms of treasure hunting. Costing a very reasonable 10,500 gp, it could easily pay for itself after the first use. Any serious treasure hunter should consider such an item a crucial part of his magical arsenal. Also consider single-use items like *scrolls of detect secret doors* for the benefit they provide in uncovering hidden treasures.

Transportation Gear: The danger of something slipping through the cracks or getting lost in the shuffle should haunt any true treasure hunter. Just a handful of useful items like a wheelbarrow, tongs, scroll case, manacles for prisoners, and your own chest with a sturdy lock should afford your newest finds significant security and you greater peace of mind.

details gloatingly revealed during torture sessions. Similarly, a villain's servants and slaves are frequently ignored as they go about their daily routines and could possess extremely valuable information. Keep in mind that lycanthropes, doppelgangers, and all manner of other shapechangers might hide among such perceived innocents. Thus, treasure hunters should always verify a newly discovered ally's legitimacy by using spells like *detect evil* and *zone of truth*.

Finally, never neglect otherwise silent witnesses your magic might make available to you, such as animals, plants, objects, and even the bodies of slain foes. Druids, with access to spells like *speak with animals*, *speak with plants*, and *stonetell*, prove especially valuable in such situations. A horse used to drag open a cunningly hidden stone door might remember its location, while a tree could recount any hollow spaces through which its roots stretch, perhaps even detailing a chest of buried treasure snarled at its base.

Overlooked Valuables

Often in the rush to complete an adventure, treasure hunters neglect to consider the potential value of "dungeon dressing" like furniture, household fixtures, books, and even the gear of their defeated foes. While it might seem penny ante, these things can add up very quickly. For instance, ten suits of chainmail armor seized from an orc war band might be resold for 750 gp. In the Middle Ages, and perhaps also in your campaign world, spices such as pepper and cinnamon were literally worth their weight in gold, so be sure not to overlook items that might seem mundane to modern sensibilites.

Approach dungeons with the attitude that you will find a buyer for everything within them. Start by taking a detailed inventory of the dungeon's contents. Cross off items with an obvious market, such as weapons or books, and then carefully consider what remains.

If you truly can't think of any buyers for some of the captured items, keep them and after a few adventures you'll probably have enough such items to hold an auction. The world teems with eccentrics, bargain hunters, and those eager for trophies and souvenirs. Someone might want the shaving kit of a former warlord or the personal journal of a mad wizard. When all else fails, simply toss the stuff into a sealed box and ask for bids on "lot 24, a chest of mystery!"

Wanted Dead or Alive!

While no hero would participate in actual slavery, foes taken alive might offer up other ways to make you rich. Start by researching if any of your prisoners possess outstanding bounties. Even a lowly guard might have offended someone enough to warrant a 20 or 30 gp reward for his capture.

If you were lucky enough to capture a spellcaster, put him to work once you eliminate him as a threat, possibly making him use his magic for you in return for his freedom. Requiring a captured spellcaster to cast spells with either permanent durations like *continual flame* or those that last until triggered like *magic mouth* gives you a source of free magic. If he possesses item creation feats, put him to work producing magic items for you to sell. The experience point costs prevent

him from becoming powerful enough to challenge you again later.

Monsters taken alive could turn a profit as zoo exhibits, gladiatorial beasts, or as curiosities for a wealthy noble or merchant prince. Creatures like cockatrices, if properly contained, make excellent guardian beasts, attacking anyone who enters their new lair. See chapter 4 of the *Arms and Equipment Guide* for more ideas on putting monsters to use, as well as the most common market prices for their purchase.

Also, never forget to check if anyone you rescued during the course of an adventure has the ability to reward you in some way. Villains often take prisoners for ransom or as leverage against a more powerful person who cares about them. The gratitude of an affluent merchant or high-level cleric could prove quite useful.

Dead foes, especially the humanoid ones, tend to be more problematic. An enemy of sufficient stature might inspire you to use spells like *raise dead* and turn him over to those willing to offer a bounty or who simply want the pleasure of executing him themselves. Expect this to backfire at some point, perhaps by the villain escaping and vowing revenge, so charge a hefty risk premium. Also, be aware that spells like *raise dead* only work if the creature's soul is willing to return. Not many beings want to return to life only to face imprisonment or execution. On a more callous note, the threat of a particularly hated or feared villain returning from the grave might inspire some kind of "death ransom" where someone actually pays you to make sure he stays dead. Depending upon the amount paid, this could range from a simple cremation and scattering of the ashes to casting *disintegrate,* or even *soul bind,* on the corpse. The villain's legal heirs, particularly if he enjoyed a noble title, sometimes make good first contacts in these sorts of negotiations. Remember, accepting multiple commissions for the same deed from a number of sources is not unethical—it's just good business.

Monsters, on the other hand, often end up worth more dead than alive. The *Monster Manual* teems with creatures that could provide interesting trinkets and trophies. A coat made from winter wolf hide, a minotaur horn mead cup, or a writing pen made from a stirge's proboscis are just a few of the possibilities. If you make a study of taxidermy, make a point of stuffing and mounting creatures like owlbears or giant vermin to sell as curiosities. Also, keep your eyes open for organs or body parts useful as potential components or items of interest to wizards and other scholarly types. If you have contacts with the idle rich, don't forget the appeal of selling a monster as an exotic bit of food. Imagine the social coup for someone who actually served dragon steak at a banquet or offered up wine made from the berries of an assassin vine.

Trust Me, It's a Gold Mine!

DMs love to include interesting magical effects, spectacular scenery, and unusual settings in adventures they design. Healing springs, wishing wells,

DEATH AND TAXES

The typical campaign world teems with petty lordlings, customs agents, and other bureaucrats little better than the bandits they claim to fend off. As a rule of thumb, attacking government officials, regardless of your level, is seldom a good idea. Governments have long memories, immense resources, and the ability to harass you almost constantly. Escaping these officials with your treasure intact depends upon advance preparation and planning.

Start by cultivating a relationship with someone higher up the governmental food chain than the inspectors you expect to deal with—a person able to intervene on your behalf, a name you might use to intimidate lesser bureaucrats into letting you pass or at least overlook some of the costlier items. Do these people favors, employ healing magic for them and their loved ones, and shower them with gifts—especially minor magic items. While this might seem excessive, keep in mind that most customs agents demand a percentage of the total value of the goods you hope to bring through their territory.

If you have no relationship with someone in authority, resort to other methods. One possible approach is to use the *illusory script* spell to implant a *suggestion* such as, "let us through and then forget." If the official makes his saving throw all he sees is gibberish, making this a fairly safe approach.

Remember, auditors expect you to try to get something past them, they distrust complete honesty, so give them some minor victories to make the inspection go smoother. Deliberately hide some minor items in obvious places, and let them have their moment of triumph when they find them. Pay the fine with a grin, and make sure the really valuable stuff remains adequately concealed.

animated statues, and similar furnishings decorate numerous dungeons. Similarly, villains often seem to choose places like mines, vineyards, and ships as their lairs.

Keep your eyes open to the wider picture when on adventures, especially in places that—should you succeed at your goals—will soon need a new owner. Sometimes the most valuable treasure in a dungeon turns out to be the dungeon itself. Whether a destination for pilgrimages or a defensible outpost, the profit potential of these places demands that you stake your claim early. Also, if a dungeon possesses a lucrative feature, like a healing spring or an actual vein of gold, it could provide a near endless source of income for entrepreneurs.

Nothing Gets Left Behind

Often, finding treasure turns out to be the easy part. Getting your newly acquired wealth home intact, without interference from those hoping to skim some of it for themselves, can be an adventure in itself. For bulky treasure, such as the tens of thousands of copper pieces DMs seem to relish dumping in dragon hoards and lichs' vaults, even finding a way to transport it could prove a daunting task.

Is This All Going to Fit?

Begin by finding the most effective way to store your treasure. Make sure to keep a decent supply of sacks and chests nearby before you enter the dungeon and prepare to use cages, bottles, and other more unusual containers when necessary. Moving a large amount of treasure might prove difficult, so whenever possible find magical ways to reduce the load.

Make full use of perennial favorites like *bags of holding*, *portable holes*, and the spell *Leomund's secret chest* as containers for your treasure. *Tenser's floating disk* makes transporting even mundane containers effortless. Never hesitate to use creativity when considering the potential of other magic items and spells. For example, casting *levitate* on a net full of loot allows you to pull it along behind you without effort. Alternatively, consider using the *permanency* spell in conjunction with *animate object* to create mobile treasure chests.

Less is Better Than None

Never forget the old maxim, "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." Treasure hunters must be level headed and practical. Never let sentiment or esthetics get between you and profit. For instance, it's better to melt down a gold statue into more manageable bars than to leave it sitting in a dungeon room waiting for someone else to come along and claim it.

This does not mean you should wantonly destroy artwork or beautiful things. They tend to be quite valuable, so whenever possible find ways to bring them out intact. Sometimes a simple *levitate* spell does the trick, turning a half-ton obstacle into something merely needing a good, hard push to get it out of the dungeon.

Porters and Pack Mules

Even the brawniest of fighters can only carry so much, and since heavy encumbrance makes all adventurers less effective in combat, finding alternative ways to get your treasure home makes good sense. Mules and other pack beasts make popular choices, as do non-combatants like peasants or local villagers. All too often adventurers find themselves protecting people who have no way to repay them for the service. Enlisting a few dozen as bearers to carry your treasure home once you've actually slain the dragon is the least they could do.

However, keep in mind that the inability of pack beasts and porters to defend themselves sometimes requires you to spend an excessive amount of time guarding them, cutting down on your opportunities for further

adventures and chances to gain more treasure. Using magic to enhance them in some way, increasing the distance they can cover, the loads they can bear, and similar factors, goes a long way toward improving the chances of all your loot (and those carrying it) safely making it back to your base of operations. Spells such as *shadow walk* allow you to efficiently lead a chain of mules across half the continent, while *animal shapes* permits you to turn your porters into birds rapidly winging over mountains and bodies of water.

Finding more unusual creatures to carry your treasure tends to be a better solution. Start by using *animate dead* to convert your former foes into tireless treasure carriers. Similarly, the *awaken* spell used on a tree could provide a very strong and able porter, one few bandits would care to mess with. Never forget the effectiveness of enchantment spells to sway a useful monster to your side just long enough to carry your gear home.

Nothing to See Here!

Successfully hiding your treasure from bandits, government inspectors, monsters, those disputing your ownership, or simply the curious involves a great deal of ingenuity and cunning. Always look for a clever angle or new trick. For instance, if you actually used an *animate dead* spell to create zombie porters, order them to swallow things like gemstones and jewelry and retrieve the items at the end of the trip. Zombies have no need to eat and feel no pain, so why let all that valuable internal space go to waste?

Use the spell *permanency* to make a chest invisible and hide your best stuff inside. Make extensive use of the *shrink item* spell in order to turn highly valuable items into ordinary swatches of cloth easily hidden and overlooked. Similarly, a *baleful polymorph* spell could be used to turn a pack mule into a songbird, cheerfully trilling in its cage while thieves and auditors tear your baggage apart vainly searching for your most valuable items.

What's Mine, Stays Mine

Having already changed hands at least once, maintaining custody of newly acquired treasure until deciding to part with it should be one of a treasure hunter's foremost concerns. The easiest solution is to keep your treasure close at hand, but this raises two problems. First, staying at home to guard your valuables means you cannot go out and get more, an unthinkable possibility for all true treasure hunters. Second, once word gets out that your stronghold contains plenty of treasure, expect visitors intent on claiming their own share with sword and spell.

X Marks the Spot

The one advantage of burying or concealing your treasure is that it leaves you free to pursue other interests while your wealth theoretically sits undisturbed. Of course, the great disadvantage is that it also leaves the treasure free for the taking should anyone find it. Make liberal use of traps and spells to deter would-be robbers.

Spells such as *alarm, explosive runes, glyph of warding,* and *sepia snake sigil* give you a measure of reassurance that your treasure will stay put. Putting treasure in hard to reach places—like using *plane shift* to deposit it on the Elemental Plane of Earth or dumping it into an ocean trench—has many advantages, but don't forget that these places have their own inhabitants. In these circumstances it's usually best to either befriend the natives or hide your wealth someplace inaccessible even to them.

Rely on Guardians

Setting up someone or something to guard your treasure often proves quite effective, either to eliminate robbers or at least buy you some time to reach your treasure before it gets spirited away. The best guards tend to be those without the need to eat, sleep, or socialize at all. Mindless undead, constructs, immobile plants, and similar creatures should make up most of your guardian roster.

Intelligent creatures, while often more adaptable, present the risk of betrayal or desertion. If concerned about their trustworthiness, be sure to employ magic like *geas/quest* or *mark of justice* to ensure they stay at their posts. Alternatively, simply seal away ferocious creatures like girallons or owlbears and expect them to attack anyone who enters (including yourself). Make sure you provide such guardians with a steady source of food or magic, like a clear spindle *ioun stone* (which sustains a creature without food and water), if you want them to last more then a few days. Another possibility is to strike a deal with an ethical monster like a gold dragon, offering it some of your treasure in exchange for temporarily adding the rest of your valuables to its horde.

by F. Wesley Schneider • illustrated by Peter Bergting

THE ECOLOGY OF THE Green Hag

Foul beyond reasoning and old beyond reckoning, half-crazed shadows cackle madly in the mist-shrouded night. Lurking in the rank, wild places even the bravest fear to tread, nightmare crones haunt the legends of every culture and hint at the corruption that festers deep within each mortal soul. Cunning predators, vengeful adversaries, and warped reflections of the civilized races, these are the monstrosities known as hags.

This treatise marks the first of a three-part series detailing the foul powers, cruel plots, and preternatural lifecycle of the mostly frequently encountered and arguably most deadly breeds of hags.

History of Green Hags

For as long as there have been tales to tell, there have been whispered warnings of hags. From legends of cruel yet wise seers prowling the fringes of civilization to cautionary tales of cursed, hate-filled women, hags haunt the mythology and folk-stories of nearly every race.

One legend stands out among the countless others, told among dozens of races with little variation. Known as Kiersana the Unfaithful to elves and to orcs as Grigga Toegnawer, the fable of the creature most commonly called Green Mary terrorizes the dreams of countless children, regardless of race.

In a time long ago Green Mary lived as a protector of the woodlands and its creatures, a beautiful druid with a forest domain encompassing hundreds of miles. Making her home at her forest's heart, protected and served by the creatures that she in turn watched over, Green Mary worshiped and obeyed the spirits of nature and their timeless laws. On the day the winds whispered of danger and the crows squawked of death, she investigated their reports. Her search led her to a powerful and skilled hunter who stalked her animal wards

out of sport and felled the trees to make his weapons. Although the voices of the forest cried out for revenge against the careless hunter, Green Mary found him as comely as he was dangerous. Moved to speak with him, she became entranced by his silken words and he compelled by her beauty. That night, Green Mary defied the timeless whispers of the forest and lay with the source of their wrath.

The next morning, the hunter awoke to find his lover horrifically transformed. The forest had reclaimed its servant's willful body, changing her milky skin into gnarled bark, her raven hair into vines, and her soft hands into twisted claws. Realizing the extent of her sin, Green Mary obeyed her spirit masters' orders with a fearful and repentant fervor. When it was done, not even a drop of the hunter's blood remained to stain the verdant ground.

Yet nature knows no mercy, and, despite Green Mary's atonement, her form did not return to its one-time alluring shape. Disgusted by her actions and new form, she fled the beautiful groves and glens through which she once danced and took up residence among the rotting vines and festering pools of her forest's most putrid swamp. Thus rose the first green hag, a creature of nature enslaved to passion but fated to destroy all after which she lusts.

Physiology of Green Hags

Green hags possess fearsome powers, horrible diseased features, and cruel natural weaponry, but despite all of this, perhaps their most disturbing trait is how closely they resemble normal humans. Ranging the same heights and weights as human females, only their withered, swampy appearances mark green hags as anything more then particularly misshapen crones, and even these tell-tale deformities might be hidden behind myriad magical disguises. Monstrous yet strangely familiar, green hags prove the least physically terrifying of all hags, marking them as the best examples of all hags' aberrant crossbred ancestry.

Although their proportions mimic those of withered human women, their bent backs and hunched postures make some appear far shorter. Their weight also runs to far greater extremes, with some green hags appearing as emaciated, skeletal things while others can barely support their own obese bulk. Regardless of appearance, one must never assume that a green hag is frail or sickly, as all of their race possess physical powers outstripping nearly any humanoid of similar size.

Aside from seemingly unnatural strength, a green hag's twisted form affords it a host of extraordinary and deadly powers. A green hag's physical similarity to human women is only superficial, as any who nears swiftly sees. Their mold-colored hair forms a wild viny tangle that rings their exaggerated, wart-covered features like a swampy mane. Their bent bodies possess a similar algae-green coloring as their hair but appear scarred and thick like bark, often marked with cancerous, knobby protrusions. This calloused hide makes green hags particularly resistant to physical attacks and often aids them in hiding amid the decaying overgrown areas in which they lair. This warped, hard physiology becomes most deadly as it extends to green hags' hands, which twist into yellow-nailed, filth-encrusted talons as deadly as any wild beast's.

Perhaps it's their physical heartiness, or their similarity to gnarled trees, but

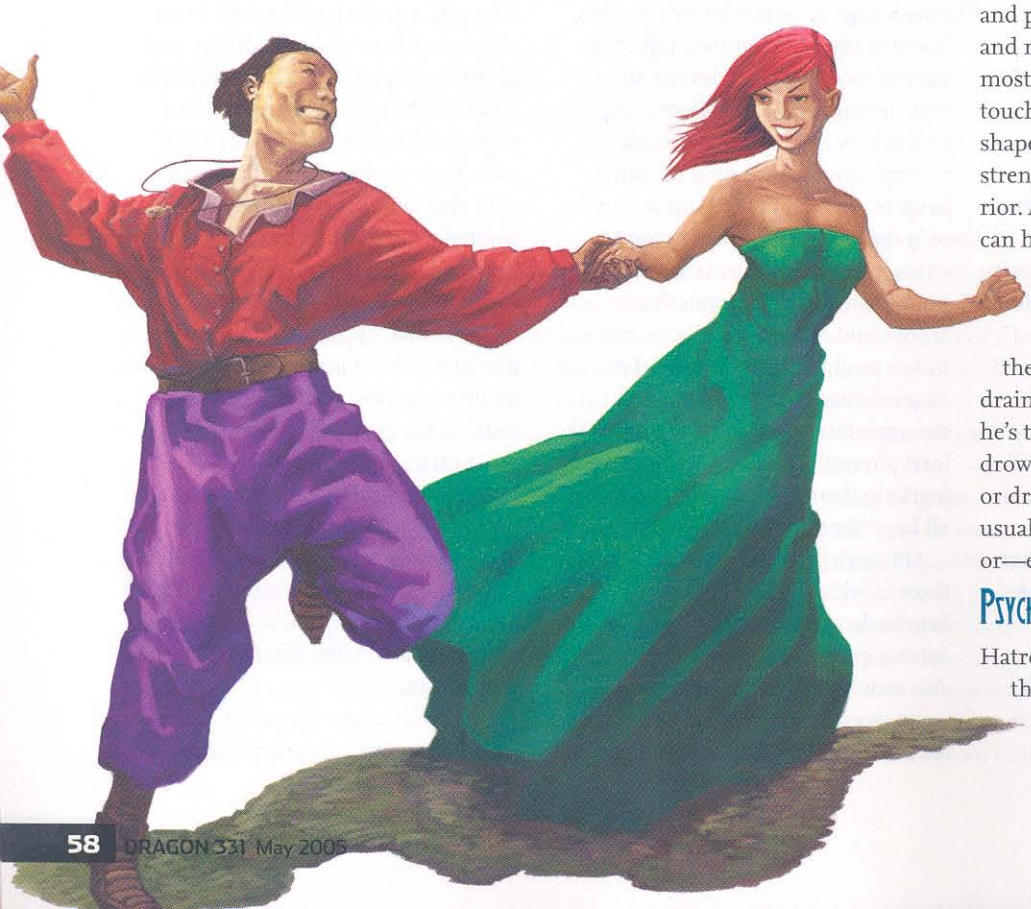
GREEN HAG KNOWLEDGE

The following table shows the results of a Knowledge (nature) check as it relates to green hags. Inhabitants of rural and frontier communities most often know this information, as it passes on through folktales and local legends. Due to widespread fictitious stories involving green hags, some of the information provided at low DCs (15 and lower) is mere superstition and has no basis in truth. Higher DC results (20 or greater) contradict such fables with legitimate facts.

Knowledge (nature)

DC	Result
10	Green hags are sadistic cronelike monstrosities who lurk only in swamps and marshes. No plant, stone, or water way hinders them within their fetid domain and they hold mastery over all natural creatures.
15	Green hags know much of magic and the natural world, and can mimic the sounds of any animal that lives near their lair. Hags can magically swap their foul spawn with the unborn babes of other races. Children suspected of having been swapped by a hag are called calibans or changelings*.
20	Green hags can drain an enemy's strength with the slightest touch and possess significant resistance to magic. Although absolutely evil, green hags are very intelligent and might barter or be reasoned with.
25	Green hags are the least xenophobic of all hags and might appear in nearly any environment. They frequently infiltrate urban settings using their innate abilities to change shape, speak any language, turn invisible, or create any number of other distractions.
30	Green hags operate just as well above water as below. They often foster their children to humanoid families, but cannot switch children before birth. There is no such thing as a caliban or changeling*.

*This is merely a colloquial term and has no relation to the changelings of the EBERRON campaign setting.



green hags never seem to age or suffer the ravages of time. As such, a green hag might terrorize a region for untold centuries, commonly becoming a famous monstrosity that haunts local legends for generations.

Already so like the uncaring natural predators of the swamps, it's little surprise that green hags can naturally mimic the sounds of the creatures that live within their domains. This ability does not extend to speech or the noises of manufactured items, but the sounds of wounded animals often prove sufficient enough to cause potential prey—whether other beasts or passing travelers—to investigate. Green hags are known for slaying and dragging away the bodies of pets and animals owned by those who live on the edge of swamps and forests, then coaxing their owners into the wilderness with the creature's mimicked cries. As such, local wisdom commonly holds that anything lost to the swamp remains there.

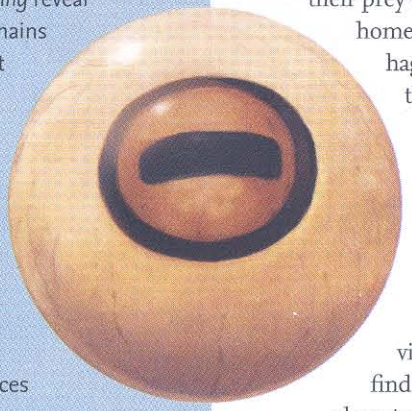
With all their deadly natural powers, the fact that green hags also possess an arsenal of supernatural and magic abilities merely compounds their horrific nature. Aside from their ability to see in total darkness, resist magic, and perform a wide range of deceitful and misleading magic, a green hag's most deadly weapon is her slightest touch. With a mere brush of her misshapen claw a green hag might sap the strength from even the strongest warrior. Although some might resist, few can hope to overpower a green hag's already formidable strength with their own leeched away. Frequently using this ability to their advantage, green hags favor draining an enemy's strength until he's totally unable to move, then either drowning him in their boggy homes or dragging him back to their lairs, usually for some unspeakable magical or—even worse—amorous purpose.

Psychology and Society

Hatred and dreams of ruin dominate the minds of green hags. They seek the destruction of all things civilized and beautiful,

POWERS OF THE COVEY: HAG EYES

One of the most potent and versatile abilities of a hag covey is the unique power to create magic gems known as *hag eyes*. While these gems superficially appear as nothing more than semiprecious stones, spells such as *true seeing* reveal them as monstrous disembodied eyes. As long as a *hag eye* remains on the same plane as its makers, any of the hags who created it can see through it whenever they please.



The creation of a *hag eye* requires a gem of any size worth no less than 50 gp, the cooperative efforts of an entire covey of hags, and three days. During these three days a covey spends much of its time in deep concentration and meditation, preventing its members from performing any action besides eating, drinking, and sleeping. Any disruption of this meditative state foils the creation of the *hag eye*, and while it does not destroy the gem, it forces the covey to begin the ritual anew. At the end of this period, the life essences of all the covey's members are bound to the *hag eye*, allowing any of them to use its powers at any time, but also causing all of them to suffer should the gem ever be destroyed (see page 144 of the *Monster Manual*). There is no limit to the number of *hag eyes* a covey might create, although only one can be created in any three-day period.

Hag coveys make use of their *hag eyes* in an insidious variety of ways.

Aberrant Accessories: Often setting *hag eyes* into jewelry, a hag with the ability to change her shape might distribute these gems to potential victims or powerful opponents as innocuous gifts, keepsakes, or forget-me-nots. Once in place, a hag knows the wearer's every step.

Watchful Masters: Hags frequently equip their servants with *hag eyes*, allowing them to keep aware of all of their minions' dealings and encounters. Combined with spells such as *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *sending*, or *whispering wind*, hags might effectively communicate through even their weakest servitors.

Natural Spies: Hags with animal companions or familiars often send such nondescript creatures (especially those with wings) on reconnaissance and patrol duties bearing *hag eyes*. Setting the gems in tree branches, hallows, and rocky crevices scattered throughout their territories also allow is hags to keep constant vigil over their claimed territories.

Treasure Trap: *Hag eyes* are frequently worked into magic items or otherwise attached to a hag covey's most powerful or valuable treasures. Should a thief steal such an item, its hag owners murderously seek out and punish the culprit, swiftly retrieving their possession.

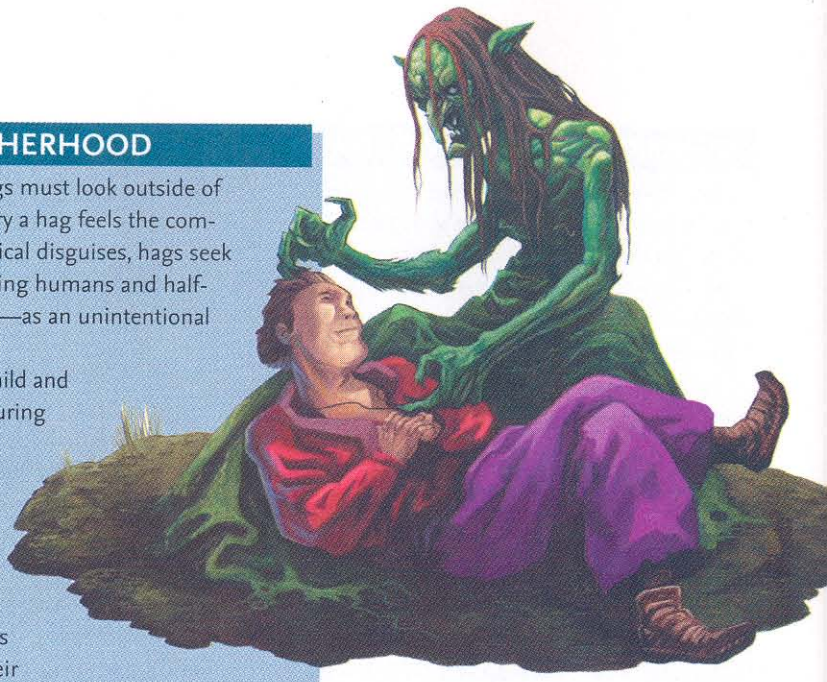
but whether out of some forgotten offense or hereditary spite is unknown. Yet while these cruel aspirations and the seemingly innate need to torment and kill inspire the foul deeds of all hags, green hags act with a malevolence and deceitfulness in excess of even their most savage brethren.

Far more glib and persuasive then any of their sister hags, green hags excel at manipulation and temptation. Their simplest plots involve using their natural and magical abilities to lure trespassers into their swampy home to face some horrible end, but green hags commonly favor far more grandiose plots. Frequently, green hags disguise themselves and walk among the very races they terrorize. Spreading rumors of wise women or beautiful fey who live in the nearby wilderness, they eagerly make themselves into local legends. Such rumors often lead the foolish and desperate to seek the source of the tales, only to fall into the green hag's clutches.

Besides luring victims to their homes, more so than any other types of hags, green hags actively seek out and invade humanoid settlements. Disguising themselves under layers of their inherent magic, green hags sometimes lair in the slums or sewers of cities, stalking their prey within their own homes. In such cases, green hags frequently disguise themselves as beautiful women and tempt men to secluded locales with libidinous promises and appealing disguises. Although green hags do not seek out male victims exclusively, they find that men quite easily, almost willingly, fall to their temptations. Once alone, they take sadistic pleasure in revealing their true forms to their would-be lovers before savagely slaughtering them. However, even worse is when a green hag's victims are more than mere would-be lovers. Insanity often follows those that survive such a traumatizing rendezvous.

With thoughts of feeding and reproduction aside, green hags ultimately seek the corruption and downfall of all things civil and pure. Intelligent and cunning in the extreme, green hags seduce and beguile their way into positions of power, installing themselves as consorts of community leaders or even false goddesses to tribes of savage humanoids. Daring those under their influence to more and more profane and degenerate acts, the greatest plots of green hags seek to recreate civilization into the brutal, decaying morasses they naturally favor.

Green hags prove far more willing to cooperate with other creatures harboring similar goals—both of their own race and others—than other breeds of hags. While all hags gain great benefits from forming coveys, green hags most frequently form such alliances and triunes of green hags form far more frequently than ones consisting exclusively of annis or sea hags. Besides their own sisters, green hags frequently ally with other evil swamp dwelling creatures, finding particular affinity with the alien cruelty of will-o-wisps, and sometimes putting



THE CHANGE: MONSTROUS MOTHERHOOD

Being a race exclusively consisting of females, hags must look outside of their own species to propagate. Once every century a hag feels the compulsion to reproduce. Using kidnapping and magical disguises, hags seek out nearly any humanoid male (seemingly preferring humans and half-elves). The resulting tryst is swift and brutal, often—as an unintentional mercy—culminating in the death of the male.

Hags innately know the moment they are with child and enter a nine-month period of decreased activity. During this time, hags largely rely on their covey sisters or guardians to protect them. However, this lethargy makes them no less deadly if they are roused to action. At the end of this period the hag gives birth to a female child that looks like a perfectly normal member of the father's race.

Despite their compulsion to bear children, hags possess no maternal instincts and rarely raise their own spawn. Instead, hags frequently seek out female newborns in nearby humanoid settlements, kidnapping and murdering a suitable child, and replacing it with their own. In this way, hags perpetuate their foul species, leaving their daughters to grow as parasites within the same cultures they despise. Often the young hags know nothing of their nature, at least until they reach maturity and undergo the Change, when they take on the form and mannerisms of a true hag.

aside their hatred of humanoids to ally with evil druids. However, like all hags, green hags feel a natural—although sometimes unwarranted—sense of superiority over all creatures and know nothing of true trust or partnership. Although a green hag might ally with or even pose as a servant to another creature, such an alliance lasts only as long as it is convenient or until she sees an opportunity to supplant her supposed master.

Vs. Green Hags

Cunning and duplicitous in ways that far outstrip even their hag sisters, only adventurers armed with the best equipment and information can hope to stand against a green hag and survive.

Second Your Senses: Green hags possess a host of spell-like abilities that allow them to trick the senses. When pursuing one of these monstrosities, adventurers should rely on multiple senses before taking anything at face value. For example, a green hag under the effect of her *disguise self* ability might be revealed simply by interacting with her physically (as creatures that touch such a glamer receive a save to disbelieve the illusion). In addition, adventurers should be wary of distracting and misleading spell-like and extraordinary abilities, such as *dancing lights*, *ghost sound*, or the hag's mimicry ability, and should only investigate unexplained sights and sounds with extreme caution.

Steel Your Strength: A green hag can sap the vigor from even the strongest warrior with the merest touch. To defend against her weakening touch, adventurers should consider casting spells like *bull's strength*, *heroism*, *protection from evil*, *lesser restoration*, or even make use of a bard's inspire courage ability to boost their Fortitude saving throws or regain lost Strength.

Dispel Disguises: Green hags may use any of their spell-like abilities at will, and thus use them frequently. While adventurers might seek to cast spells like *dispel magic* or *glitterdust* to reveal a magically masked green hag, these crones can replace their dispelled disguises in moments. Instead, hag hunters should cast spells that continually reveal or bypass illusions, such as *detect thoughts*, *invisibility purge*, or *true seeing*. Better funded adventurers should seek out magic items like *dust of appearance* or *gems of seeing*, which provide more versatile, longer-lasting, and more reliable effects.

Unexpectedly Underwater: Adventurers cannot afford to forget that green hags can move just as nimbly underwater as on land. Possessing both a swim speed and the spell-like ability to breathe water, every stagnant pool and placid pond becomes a potential ambush site. Taking advantage of their weakness supernatural ability and their target's vulnerable state, green hags take special pleasure in grappling those who pass by their hunting waters and dragging them underwater, where the victim's surprise and terror swiftly brings a particularly horrific death by drowning.

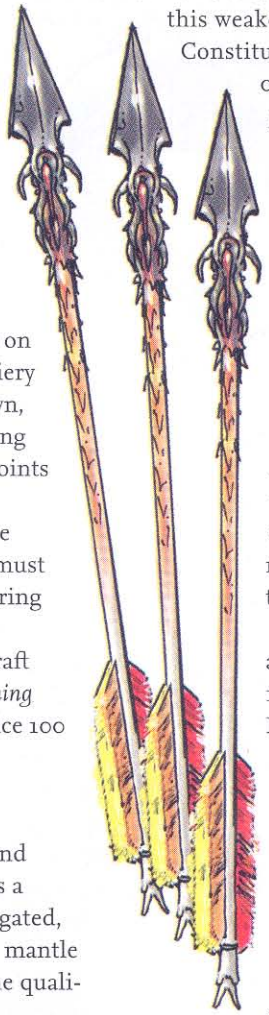
Classed Crones and Local Legends: Perhaps more than any other hag, green hags are likely to take levels in a variety of character classes (see "Root of Evil" in *Dungeon* #122 for an example). Well suited to the various spellcasting classes, as well as those that thrive in natural settings, green hags frequently add the abilities of barbarians, druids, or sorcerers to their already potent arsenal of abilities. Thus, adventurers should always research their prey and listen well to the stories of locals. The tale of Gnarled Jan controlling the beasts of the swamps might suggest a green hag druid more powerful than her ordinary kin.

by Timothy T. Murphy • illustrated by John Gallagher

INSIDIOUS ITEMS

Magic items. Heroes of so many worlds rely upon them. Rings, potions, weapons, armor, and countless other trinkets provide these adventurers with the means to survive against incredible odds. Heroes rely upon magic items because such treasures are so reliable. Spellcasters have so finely tuned the art and craft behind their creation that few think twice before using an enchanted sword taken from the battlefield. Certainly, crafters sometimes make mistakes, but more often a faulty item turned out exactly as its crafter intended: warped and cursed.

Arrow of Bursting



This arrow's shaft has numerous shallow carvings of flames running from its black, wrought-iron tip to its red, orange, and yellow fletching. Disguised by a *Nystul's magic aura* to appear as a *+1 arrow* (DC 11 Will save to disbelieve, if you cast *identify* on it), this arrow explodes in a fiery burst when nocked and drawn, burning the archer and cutting the bowstring. It deals 2d6 points of fire damage (DC 18 Reflex save for half). Failing the save snaps the bowstring, which must be replaced. A severed bowstring requires 1 round to replace.

Faint evocation; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *burning hands, Nystul's magic aura;* Price 100 gp; Weight —.

Ghost Mantle

An old gray cloak, tattered and musty, the *ghost mantle* bears a clasp in the form of an elongated, screaming ghostly face. The mantle grants its wearer many of the qualities and abilities of a ghost.

Once the clasp is done, the wearer (and all of his equipment) becomes incorporeal. He also gains the manifestation ability, horrific appearance, and corrupting touch attack, as per the ghost template (see page 117 of the *Monster Manual*). The *ghost mantle's* wearer also gains the same immunity to effects that require Fort saves as a creature with the undead type. In exchange for this power, though, the mantle slowly feeds off of the wearer's life force.

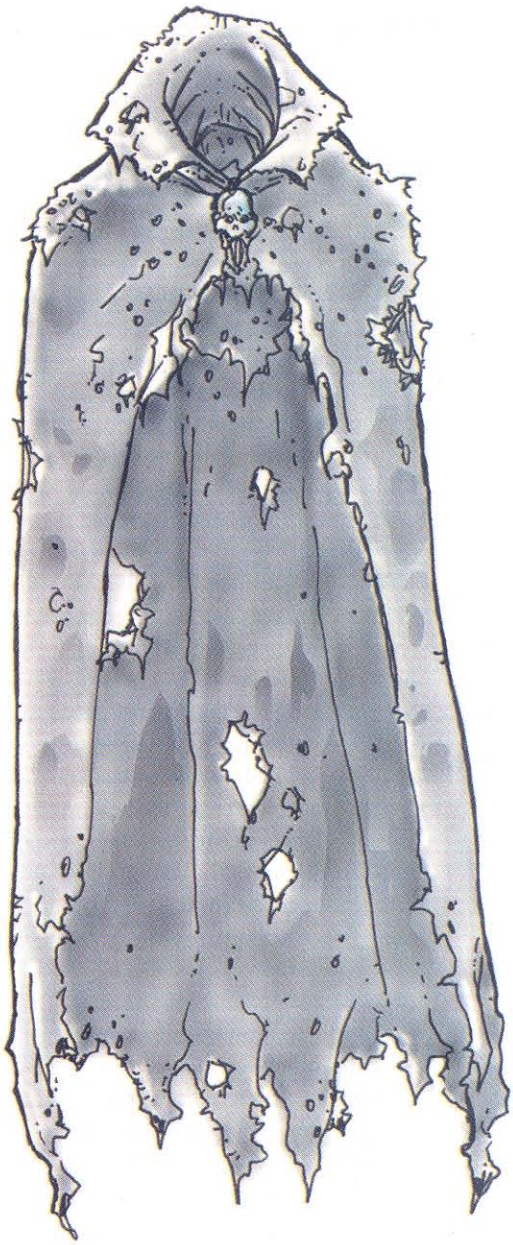
Immediately upon donning the *ghost mantle* the wearer suffers 1 point of Constitution drain, and he takes an additional 1 point of Constitution drain every round thereafter until slain or he removes the mantle. The mantle hides this damage from the wearer, although he can make a DC 20 Wisdom check to realize this weakening. If the wearer's Constitution score reaches 0 while wearing the *ghost mantle* (whether from the mantle's drain effect or from another source), the *ghost mantle* immediately teleports 1d100 miles in a random direction (it never appears within a solid object). An hour later, the slain wearer becomes a chaotic evil ghost who cannot be laid to rest until the cloak is destroyed.

Strong necromancy and transmutation; CL 17th; Craft Wondrous Item; *create greater undead;* Price 100,000 gp; Weight 3 lb.

Mask of the Sun's Radiance

A beautiful mask sewn together from the petals of brightly colored flowers, this item surrounds its wearer's face with a feathery sunburst.

When first donned the mask simply surrounds the wearer's face, molding slightly to fit comfortably.



The wearer can still remove the mask simply by pulling it away until the sun's rays alight upon it. Once the sun touches it, the mask bonds with the wearer's face, becoming a part of it, and can only be removed with a successful *break enchantment, miracle, remove curse,* or *wish.* Any attempt to remove the bonded mask other than casting the aforementioned spells deals 1d6 points of damage to the wearer.

Once the mask has bonded to his face, whenever the wearer is in natural sunlight the mask seems to draw in the sun's power. This fills the wearer with a sensation of warmth, fulfillment, and personal strength, granting a +4 enhancement bonus to Charisma.

Once bonded and away from the natural sunlight, however, the true horror of the mask becomes apparent. If deprived of the sun's light, the wearer feels lethargic, tired, and old. In this condition, the mask's wearer loses the +4 enhancement bonus to Charisma, and instead suffers a –6 penalty to her Charisma.

Moderate transmutation; CL 8th; Craft Wondrous Item, *bestow curse, eagle's splendor;* Price 10,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Ring of Breathing Water

This ring is made of polished pink coral with images of leaping fish encircling the band.

The *ring of breathing water* grants the wearer unlimited use of *water breathing* while he remains underwater. Upon returning to the surface, however, the wearer quickly discovers that he can no longer breathe air. He can remain above water for as long as he would have previously been able to hold his breath underwater before the ring's curse (see the rules for drowning on page 304 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). Once worn underwater, a *remove curse* spell is required to remove the ring.

Moderate transmutation; CL 12th; Forge Ring, *freedom of movement, water breathing;* Price 6,000 gp; Weight —.

Rod of Animated Dead

Made of a humanoid femur, this rod bears a skeletal hand at one end, the fingers grasping the end with the rod pressed into the hand's palm. A *rod of animated dead* allows the wielder to cast *animate dead,* affecting all corpses within a 30-foot burst, centered on the rod's bearer, up to five times per day. With each activation the rod animates up to 10 Hit Dice of skeletons or zombies, beginning with those corpses closest to the rod's wielder.

Unfortunately for the wielder, undead animated using the rod are not under his control and immediately attack any living creature nearby—with the wielder of the rod attacked in preference over all other targets. Rod-animated undead otherwise act as normal undead.

Moderate Necromancy; CL 5th; Craft Rod, *animate dead;* Price 24,000 gp; Weight 2 lb.

Rod of Delusions

This rod looks exactly like a *rod of enemy detection,* and any attempt to determine its nature reveals it as such. The rod even tangentially acts as a *rod of enemy detection,* pulsing and pointing in the direction of creatures hostile to its bearer.

However, when the wielder concentrates for a full round in an attempt to pinpoint an enemy or learn how many enemies are nearby, the *rod of delusions* reveals its true nature. At the end of the full-round action the wielder must succeed at a DC 19 Will save or become delusional. A delusional character perceives numerous enemies around her. Ghosts linger just beyond the walls, illusionists whisper spells of deceit just around the corner, and worst of all, doppelgangers impersonate her fellow adventurers! These delusions cause a wielder who fails her Will save to attack the creatures nearest to her, typically her allies. She continues to attack nearby creatures until either they are all killed, she falls unconscious (or is killed), or all visible targets leave her line of sight. At that time she becomes fatigued and breaks free of the delusions, realizing with horror what she has done.

In combat, the *rod of delusions* functions as a *+1 light mace.* If under the effects of the rod's delusions, the wielder uses it in combat to attack nearby targets even if she has a better weapon or has no proficiency with a mace.

Strong enchantment; CL: 10th; Craft Rod, *confusion, true seeing;* Price 20,000 gp; Weight 4 lb.

Singing Ioun Stone

Specifically designed to slowly render spellcasters powerless, this stone is disguised to look like any other known ioun stone. When set in orbit about the head, the user hears twenty drunken voices loudly singing a bawdy drinking song over and over again, a cacophony only he can hear. The mental chorus is enough to disrupt the concentration of even the most resolute spellcaster. When attempting to cast a spell the victim must first succeed at a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level). If the victim fails this Concentration check, he automatically loses the spell he was casting. Attempts to use a skill not based on Strength or Constitution increases the DC of the skill check by +10, due to the constant distraction. The victim cannot take 10 or take 20 on any skill while under the effect of this item.

Dispel magic and *protection from evil* suppress the song for 1 minute per caster level. The song otherwise rolls on endlessly in the victim's mind, even during sleep. Because of this constant noise, anyone afflicted with a *singing ioun stone* must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save in order to get any rest. If he fails that save he gets no rest and can neither prepare new spells nor regain spell slots.

Attempts to remove the stone by physical force cause the stone to freeze in place and emit a piercing wail that deals 1d6 points of sonic damage to

every creature within 30 feet and deals 1d6 points of Intelligence damage to the stone's victim. A *break enchantment, miracle, remove curse,* or *wish* spell allows for the safe removal of the stone.

Moderate evocation; CL 12th; Craft Wondrous Item, *shout;* Price 12,000 gp; Weight —.

Spellbook of Dissolution

When one of these onerous tomes is first found, it appears to be a perfectly normal empty spellbook. A *Nystul's magic aura* spell masks the book's terrible magical secret.

Whenever a wizard scribes a spell into a *spellbook of dissolution,* the spell scribed within becomes unreadable gibberish that even the wizard who scribed it cannot understand. The garbled spells resist any attempt at deciphering them, as if of too high a level for the reader to understand. Decipher Script checks automatically fail, as do any attempts to *read magic.* Even a *wish* cannot reveal what the text means (as it is ultimately magically shrouded complex gibberish).

The garbling process takes 2 hours per level of the spell inscribed (a 0-level spell requires only 1 hour), and begins as soon as the spellbook is closed after the wizard first inscribes the spell. In addition, if the book is left in contact with another spellbook, the spells within the other tome begin to garble at the same rate, beginning with the lowest-level spells first. This process is halted whenever the other spellbook is moved away from the *spellbook of dissolution.*

Moderate transmutation; CL 7th; Create Wondrous Item, *secret page;* Price 6,250 gp; Weight 3 lb.

Walking Staff

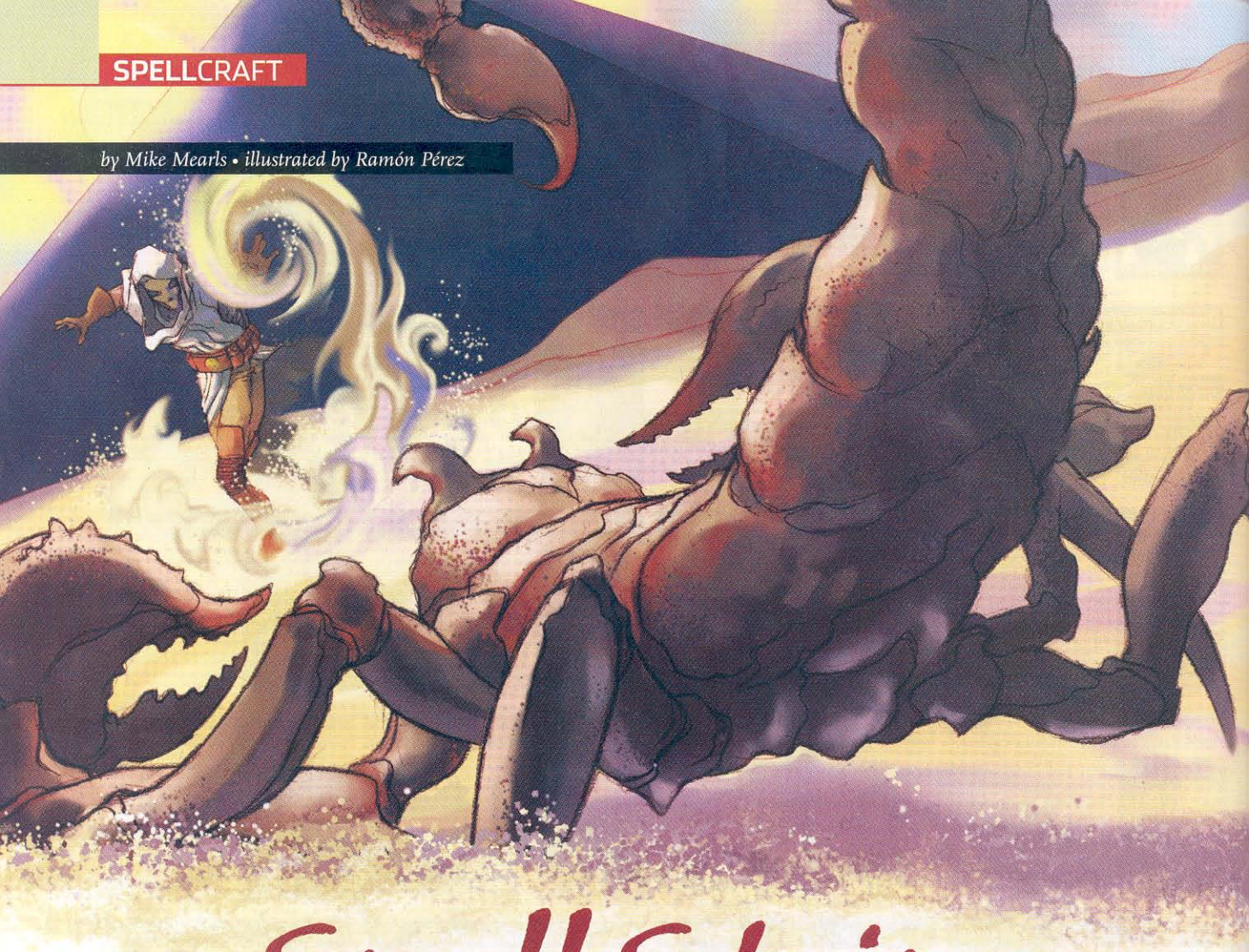
Made of ash or oak, this 6-foot-long staff bears carvings of several kinds of animal tracks running its length, as well as other small decorations. One end has a hole drilled through it with a loop of leather passing through the hole. A *walking staff* allows use of the following spells:

- *Freedom of movement* (1 charge)
- *Longstrider* (1 charge)
- *Pass without trace* (1 charge)
- *Find the path* (2 charges)
- *Tree stride* (2 charges)

Recently, *walking staffs* began manifesting a dangerous and sometimes fatal flaw. For reasons even the wisest and most experienced druids don't understand, the forces of nature have taken a disagreeable view to the use of these items. Rumors hint that lightning sometimes strikes those druids who use these staffs too often. Every time the staff's wielder uses one of the staff's spells, there is a 3% per charge cumulative chance that she is struck by a 5d6 *lightning bolt* originating just above her head that strikes only her (DC 14 Reflex save for half). The chance cannot exceed 95%. Once a *lightning bolt* strikes, the druid's cumulative chance of having another one strike her is cut in half (but it accumulates as normal). A specific druid's cumulative chance of being struck when using a *walking staff* remains with her, even if she should use a different *walking staff.* For example, a druid uses the staff's *longstrider* spell and has a 3% chance of being immediately struck by lightning. Assuming lightning doesn't strike, when she later uses the staff's *tree stride* ability she then has a 9% chance of being struck (3% carried over + 3% per charge of *tree stride*). If the druid accumulates a 51% chance of being struck before lightning strikes, her cumulative chance of being struck drops to 25%. It then begins to rise again whenever she uses a *walking staff,* even if it is a different one.

Strong varied; CL 12th; Craft Staff, *find the path, freedom of movement, longstrider, pass without trace, tree stride;* Price 39,500 gp; Weight 4 lb.

by Mike Mearls • illustrated by Ramón Pérez



Spell Strips of the Black Pyramid

Hidden amid the sun-scorched dunes of the most forbidding desert lies a tainted barren of black sand. From the withered heart of this lifeless waste rises a single structure, a black pyramid that radiates an eternal curse. Although no lore survives to tell what tragedy befell this accursed place, all things touched by its sands are irreversibly tainted and the unliving things that call it home are little more than half-seen nightmares. Thus, it's no surprise that the ancient arcana pilfered from its depths bear not only powerful secrets, but the taint of this land's forgotten curse.

The *Spell Strips of the Black Pyramid* harbor many formulae that draw upon the power of the desert, but those who use them risk the wrath of ancient gods. Found scribed upon the wrappings of a mummy discovered deep within the pyramid, these spells have since been copied onto actual parchment. Readers should be warned, however, for these spells have brought woe upon all who come to possess them. Little is known of the mage who first found these spells. According to rumors, he died shortly after returning to civilization. His apprentice, eager to carry on his master's work, copied the spells from the cloth strips that originally bore them into actual tomes and sold them to a number of mages. Within a year, the apprentice disappeared. Similar mysterious fates befell numerous mages who purchased the scribed strips.

Presented here are the unique spells found within the rare tomes now known as *Spell Strips of the Black Pyramid.* Spellcasters who come across one of these tomes gain great control over the powers of the sand and sun, but not without risking a terrible price (see the Curse of the Black Pyramid sidebar).

Camel's Tenacity

Transmutation
Level: Clr 4, Drd 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature or creatures touched (up to one/level)
Duration: 1 day/3 levels
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes

You grant the targets of this spell the ability to survive without food or water. The targets gain sufficient internal reserves of nourishment to sustain them for as long as this spell is in effect. This spell does not protect targets from the effects of magical dehydration (see *Sandstorm* for a complete description of the effects of dehydration).

Material Component: A fistful of camel hair.

Desert Burial

Evocation
Level: Drd 4, Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: 20-ft.-radius spread
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex negates
Spell Resistance: No

This sadistic spell draws those within the area of effect down into the sand, leaving only the victims' heads exposed for the sun and scavengers to wreak their harsh will upon. Creatures within the area of effect must make a Reflex saving throw. Those that fail are sucked into the ground. For most living creatures this means being buried up to their necks, though for some it might be a branch or pseudopod. Creatures are never buried in a manner that prevents them from breathing.

Once a creature is buried by this spell it is rendered helpless unless it can succeed at a Strength or Escape Artist check with a DC equal to 15 + 1 for every two caster levels you possess. This check requires a full-round action. Spellcasters caught by this spell cannot cast any spell with a somatic component or a spell with a material component unless the spellcaster has the component in hand when affected by this spell. A creature not caught by the spell can aid a trapped creature in its escape attempt.

This spell only affects loose earth, such as dirt, mud, and sand. It is ineffectual when cast upon stone, wood, or other solid surfaces. Particularly cruel spellcasters often cast this spell upon those wading through shallow waters, areas replete with tiny carnivorous vermin, or as a precursor to the spell *transmute mud to rock*.

Material Component: A paper funnel and a handful of dirt, mud, or sand.

Dust Storm

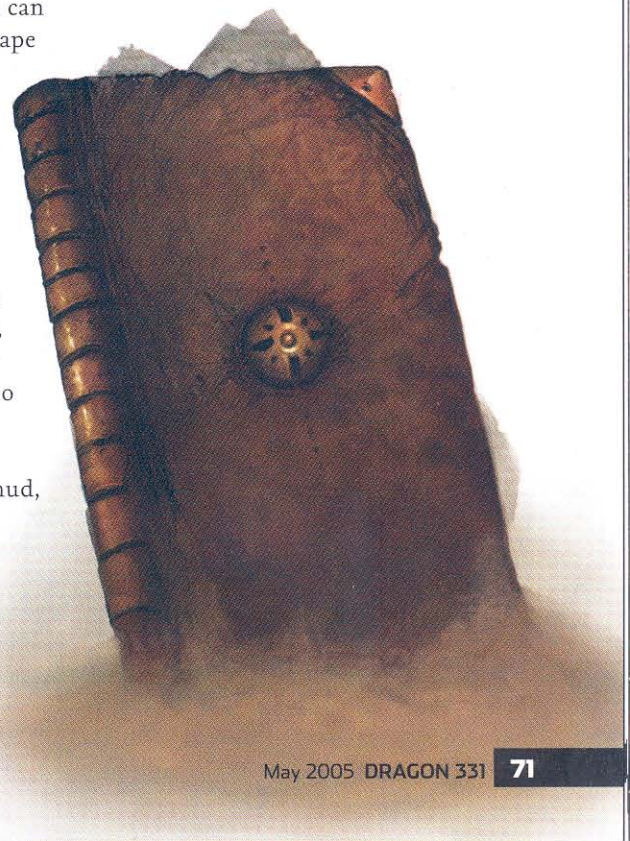
Conjuration (Creation)
Level: Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. level)
Effect: Sand storm cylinder 60-feet across and 30 ft. high

CURSE OF THE BLACK PYRAMID

Long ago, a mortal wizard named Arzarran stole knowledge of these spells from the deities of the sun and desert. For this transgression, he was cursed for eternity, as have been all other spellcasters who learn his secrets. Every time an arcane caster uses one of these spells, there is a cumulative 1% chance that Arzarran's curse activates. This chance resets to 0% during the spring equinox.

If the curse comes into play, the caster faces a dire threat. The mummy of Arzarran, the same mummy from which the spell strips were first stolen, rises from the black pyramid and pursues the caster. This mummy is wrapped in ancient, black silks and wears a mantle of frayed cloth strips upon which every spell within *Spell Strips of the Black Pyramid* is scribed. This creature's CR should exceed the caster's level by at least 3, and it therefore probably has numerous class levels, probably in wizard or sorcerer. While the mummy or mummy lord presented on page 190 of the *Monster Manual* might suffice as Arzarran, the skirr or mummified creature template on page 111 of *Libris Mortis* make considerably more monstrous threats—ones obviously cursed by the gods. Additionally, higher-level parties might be better challenged by the swarm-shifter template—and the CR 16 mummy king presented with it as an example—on page 124 of *Libris Mortis,* or the dry lich template from chapter 6 of *Sandstorm*.

Once awakened by use of these accursed spells, this undead monster pursues its quarry until either it or its target is destroyed. The body of anyone slain by Arzarran disappears a day later, leaving behind only a pile of black sand, the corpse carried away by the gods and mummified within the black pyramid.



NEW SPELLS IN SPELL STRIPS OF THE BLACK PYRAMID

Copies of *Spell Strips of the Black Pyramid* most commonly appear as weathered folios, their pages scribed in faded brown inks and with stylized images of the sun adorning their covers. Although these tomes are rare, at least eleven copies were originally created and more might have been copied since then. However, every time the bearer of one of these tomes vanishes the spellbook goes missing as well, supposedly spirited away by the gods back to the black pyramid. A copy of *Spell Strips of the Black Pyramid*, holding only the new spells presented here, is worth 800 gold pieces, although this might be significantly lower if the buyer knows about the associated curse.

Those interested in further expanding their repertoire of desert magic or who wish to unlock spells similar to those found in *Spell Strips of the Black Pyramid* should consider the dozens of spells presented in chapter 5 of *Sandstorm*.

Cleric Spells

3rd-Level Cleric Spells

Screen of Heat: Shimmering illusion causes 25% miss chance to all attacks through it.

4th-Level Cleric Spells

Camel's Tenacity: Travel without food or water.

5th-Level Cleric Spells

Touch of the Pharaoh: Afflicts a creature with mummy rot.

Druid Spells

3rd-Level Druid Spells

Camel's Tenacity: Travel without food or water.

Dust Storm: Create a blinding storm that deals 1d6 damage per round.

Screen of Heat: Shimmering illusion causes 25% miss chance to all attacks through it.

4th-Level Druid Spell

Desert Burial: Buries targets up to their necks in sand.

Sorcerer/Wizard Spells

3rd-Level Sorcerer/Wizard Spell

Dust Storm: Create a blinding storm that deals 1d6 damage per round.

4th-Level Sorcerer/Wizard Spells

Desert Burial: Buries targets up to their necks in sand.

6th-Level Sorcerer/Wizard Spell

Sand Spiral: Cone deals 1d6 damage per level, –2 penalty on attacks, checks, and saves.

7th-Level Sorcerer/Wizard Spell

Crown of Despair: All creatures that see you must save or be paralyzed.

Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

A howling windstorm appears within the spell's area of effect, filling it with a dark bank of whirling sand that obscures vision while injuring those caught within it. The sand obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. All targets within 5 feet are treated as having concealment (attacks have a 20% miss chance). Creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance, and the attacker can't use sight to locate the target).

If a creature ends its action within the sand storm, it suffers 1d6 points of slashing damage from the stinging sand.

Crown of Despair

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Sor/Wiz 7
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

Upon casting this spell your head is crowned in ghostly black burial wrappings. All creatures that see you must succeed at a Will save or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds. Whether a creature succeeds at its save or not, that creature cannot be affected by this casting of the spell again for its remaining duration.

Material Component: A scrap of a mummy's burial linen.

Sand Spiral

Evocation
Level: Sor/Wiz 6
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: 60 ft.
Area: Cone-shaped burst
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half and Fortitude negates; see text
Spell Resistance: No

A swirling blast of the desert's elements assaults your opponents. Creatures within the spell's area cough and gag as the sand pours into their mouths and noses, scratches their eyes, and scours their flesh, dealing 1d6 points of damage per caster level (maximum 15d6). Targets are allowed a Reflex save for half.

In addition, any creature within the spell's area of effect must make a Fortitude save or suffer a –2 penalty on all attacks, checks, and saving throws for 1 minute due to the painful, searing sand. Creatures immune to critical hits ignore this penalty and take only half damage from this spell (none if they make their Reflex save).

Material Component: A fistful of sand that the caster throws forward while casting the spell.

Screen of Heat

Illusion (Glamer)
Level: Clr 3, Drd 3
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Area: A screen of heat, up to 10-ft. square/level
Duration: 1 min./level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You create a veil of shimmering heat that blurs and masks a creature's location, similar to the effect that distorts objects in the distance on a hot day. The screen is less than an inch thick and is totally intangible.

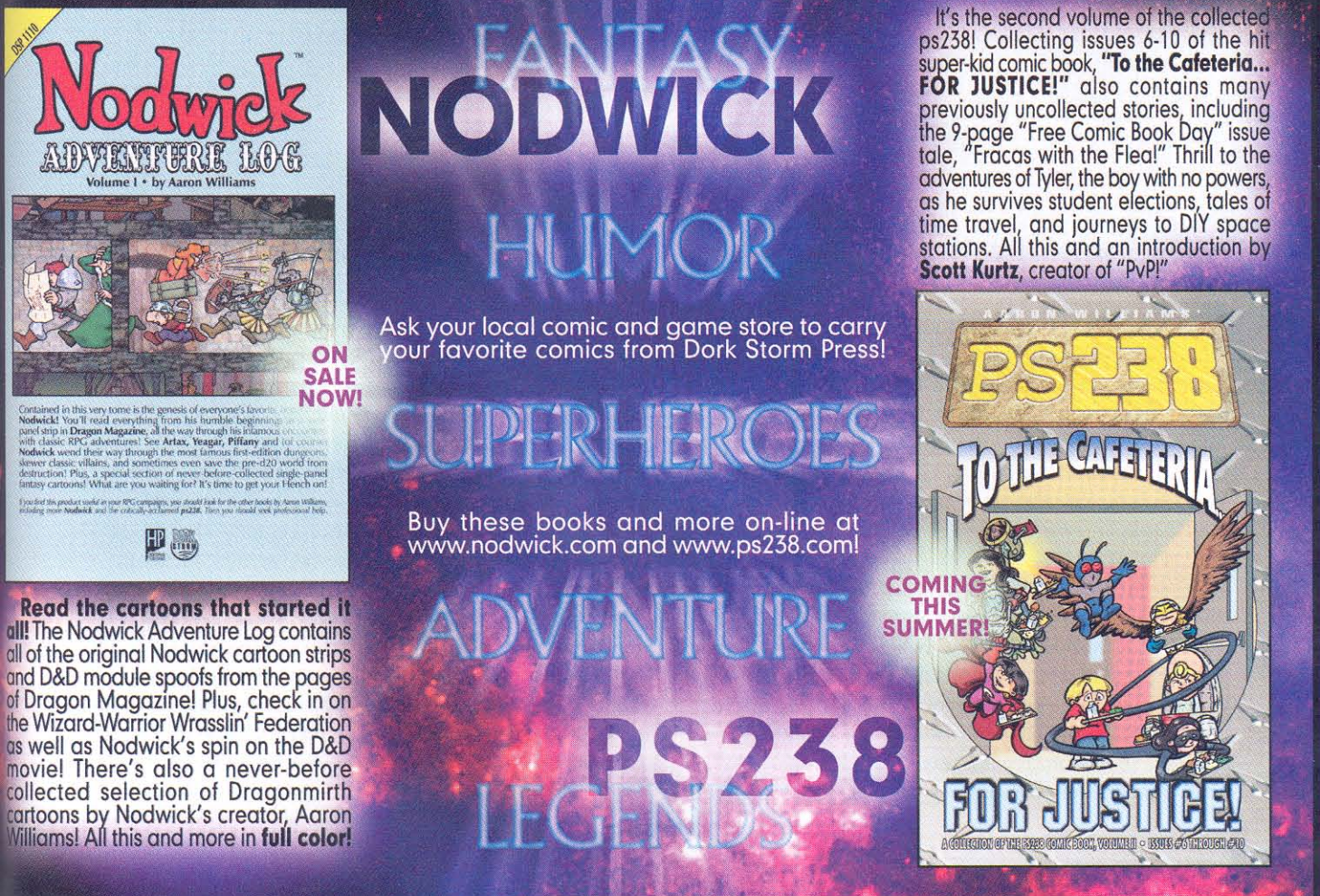
You can make the screen's hazy illusion either one-sided or two-sided. If it is one-sided, the illusion only affects those looking through the screen from one direction, while those looking through it from the other side are unaffected by the illusion. If it is two-sided, creatures that look through the screen from either direction are affected by the warping illusion.

Creatures who look through the *screen of heat's* illusion see images on the other side as wavering, distorted shapes. This grants concealment to any creature perceived through the illusion (20% miss chance). A *see invisibility* spell does not counter the effects of this spell, although *true seeing* does. Creatures that do not rely on sight to perceive opponents suffer no penalties when attacking through the screen. If the screen of heat's illusion is only one-sided, creatures on one side of the screen suffer a chance to miss, while those on the other side may make attacks without being affected.

Touch of the Pharaoh

Necromancy [Evil]
Level: Clr 5
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Living creature touched
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

The subject contracts mummy rot (dealing 1d6 Constitution and 1d6 Charisma damage), which strikes immediately (no incubation period). Targets affected by mummy rot cannot be healed normally. Any character afflicted by mummy rot cannot be affected by a conjuration (healing) spell unless the caster of that spell succeeds at a DC 20 caster level check. See page 191 of the *Monster Manual* for mummy rot's full effects.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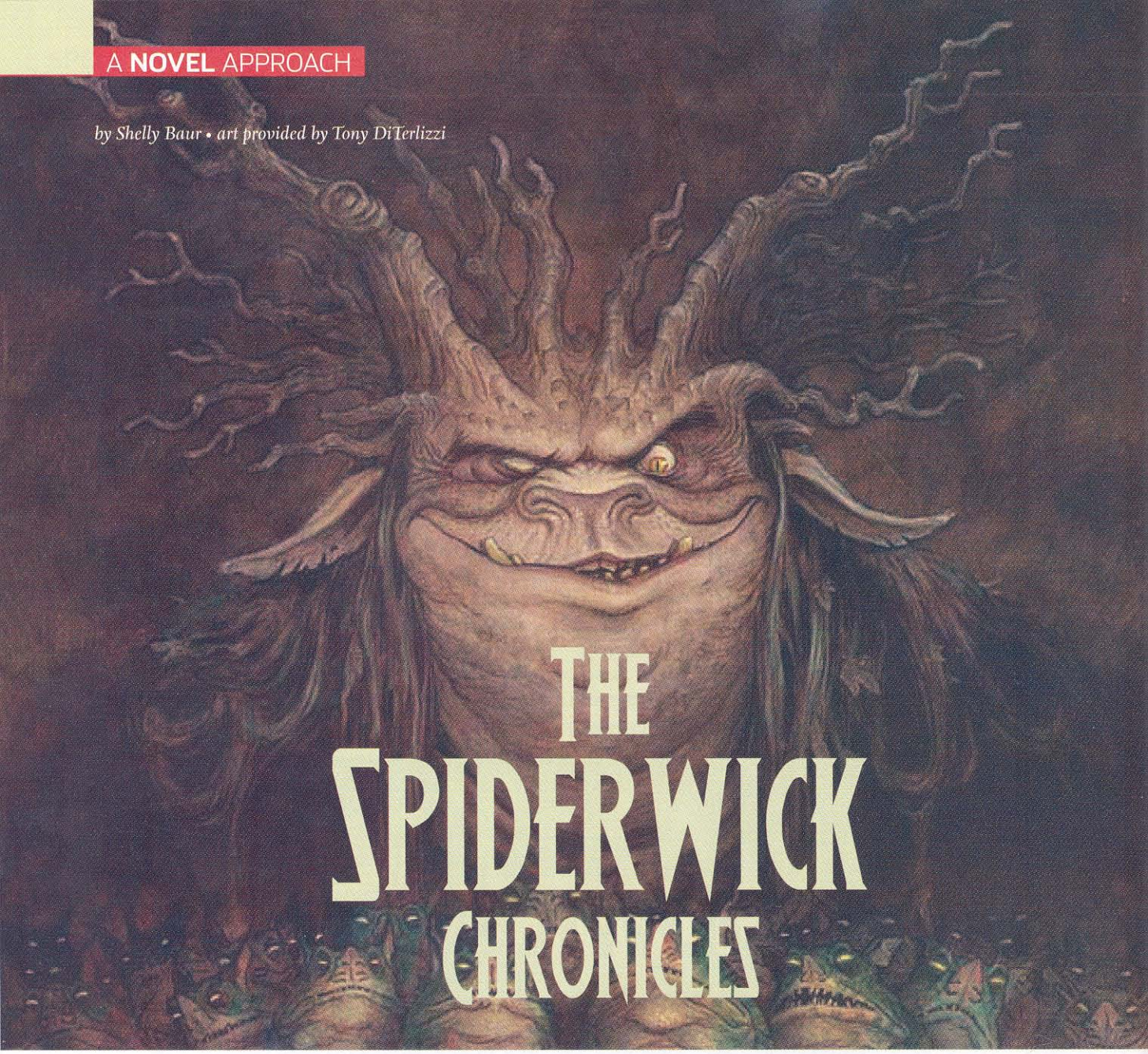


THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES

If you're a gamer who has always wanted to play with the monsters instead of against them, *The Spiderwick Chronicles* are for you. Written by fan-favorite D&D artist Tony DiTerlizzi and long-time gamer Holly Black, this New York Times bestselling serial explores the world of fairies and the challenges inherent in facing stronger and sometimes smarter monsters. Although targeted for younger readers, these books are sure to please any playful adventurer.

The World of Spiderwick

The Grace children of *The Spiderwick Chronicles* live in a fairy-infested world. Following their parent's divorce, Jared, Simon, and Mallory Grace move into a ramshackle Victorian house owned by their crazy Aunt Lucinda. They have never met Lucinda, but judging by her house, it is no wonder she's been kept in a sanatorium for years. For Jared, age 9, the new home provides a chance to start over at a new school after his troublemaking gets him kicked out of his previous one. Simon, his twin, thinks of all the space he has to put new pets. Their older sister Mallory, 13, just sees how run down the place looks. She doesn't care too much though, because the lawn provides plenty of room to practice her fencing moves.

The house itself looks like "a dozen shacks had been piled on top of one another." It even seems like small animals live inside, which Jared—often aware of what the others would miss—notices when he sees what he thinks to be a squirrel running around in the walls. Simon instantly wants to make it his new pet, while Mallory charges ahead with a broom handle, knocking a hole in the wall and scaring the creature up the shaft of the dumbwaiter. Scouting where it could have gone, Jared finds himself in a boarded-up library, closed for many, many years. As he explores, the cryptic words, "Click clack, watch your back," prophetically appear in the room's dust. Returning to his siblings, he

tries to convince them that it wasn't just his imagination. That attempt works as well as trying to convince their mom they weren't causing trouble—which is to say, not at all.

Mrs. Grace, their mother, becomes even less convinced the kids weren't causing trouble when Mallory wakes up screaming in the morning, her hair tied tightly to the headboard. Mrs. Grace suspects that Jared must have done it, as he's caused problems ever since their father left. Mallory and Simon realize there might be another explanation—that something lives in this house that's neither cute nor imaginary.

With nothing better to do, Jared explores. Climbing the rotten stairs into the dusty attic he finds Arthur Spiderwick's *Field Guide to the Fantastical World Around You*, a handbook on fairies that details many creatures including one likely to be sharing the Grace home, a house brownie. After this, the kids discover that once they enter the world of fairy, they can never truly back out. First, the goblins come, then the troll, the elves, the dwarves, and finally the worst monstrosity of them all—the ogre Mulgarath—who seeks to destroy the handbook and all who've seen it.

Taking Inspiration

The Spiderwick Chronicles present several themes useful in nearly any campaign.

Ordinary Heroes

"Unlike Harry Potter, these are ordinary kids in extraordinary situations. The only way they get out of them is with their wits." *–Tony DiTerlizzi*

Fantasy characters commonly come in two flavors, those marked for greatness by birth and those who achieve greatness through their deeds. While both have their merits, playing a PC who's born lacking great wealth or a predetermined destiny most often leads to greater roleplaying challenges. It's the difference between having a magic sword given to you by a fairy godmother versus earning one after months of roleplaying. Both versions are nice, but you're sure to remember the one your PC earned. Because PCs without predetermined destinies must watch out for themselves they force their players to look at more options and play more carefully, leading to more chances for surprising, more memorable games. For instance, in *Spiderwick* the Grace kids hold very few magic items, instead

AN INTERVIEW WITH AUTHORS TONY DITERLIZZI AND HOLLY BLACK

D&D fans remember Tony DiTerlizzi as the man responsible for the innovative, surreal look of the second edition Planescape *campagin setting. Since then, he's shifted to the plane of children's literature, illustrating both his own writing and other authors' works, including the 2003 Caldecott Honor winning book,* The Spider and the Fly. *He lives in Amherst, Massachusetts with his wife, Angela, and pug, Goblin.*

Co-author Holly Black ported from the gaming community's d8 Magazine *into young adult fiction.* Tithe: A Modern Faerie Tale, *marked her entry into the world of fairy. She also recently moved to Amherst, Massachusetts with her husband, Theo.*

Dragon *caught up with Tony and Holly after they'd returned home from a whirlwind month-long national book tour for their latest collaboration,* The Spiderwick Chronicles.

You've been interested in fairies since forever, so how did you finally start your own fairy chronicle?

Tony: *We had been given a note at a bookstore that Holly and I were signing at. The note told of real life adventures with faeries that these three siblings, the Grace children, had experienced. We found it so compelling that Holly and I decided to tell their story in a series of books called* The Spiderwick Chronicles.

Holly had written for a young adult audience, and my books were mostly picture books for younger readers. We focused on creating a story for 7–10 year olds who were too young for Harry Potter but were older than kids reading picture books.

(Continued on page 77)

relying on their skills and resources at hand. When they do defeat a superior monster, the reader can see they were actually challenged rather than just following some rote plot point.

DMs setting up adventures for similar ordinary heroes should limit magic and other powerful items, figure out multiple avenues to resolve conflicts, and let players create their own unanticipated twists, even if that means carrying the action into future adventures. Just like in reality, catch the PCs unaware of encounters to come. Think of Bilbo Baggins being rushed out the door without his pocket-handkerchief.

Decay of the Natural Balance

In a real ecosystem, when one species for some reason becomes more successful, it affects all the others, upsetting the natural balance. In a fantasy ecosystem, this tipping point might stir changes in a hierarchy of monsters and could easily start a campaign. Traditional powers holding the monsters in check, like elves or more powerful monsters, might begin to wane. PCs could start by solving small adventures that are really just symptoms of the one underlying cause. In *Spiderwick*, the kids need to stop the environmental incursion of the human lands to reverse the decay of the fairy lands.

In a more traditional D&D vein, consider the felling of Europe's great forests during the Middle Ages. This time of logging and clearing land for farming fits into the medieval feel of many fantasy campaigns, and could set up a similar situation to *Spiderwick's* using any number of woodland monsters. This creates more complications than PCs usually face. For instance, convincing people to stop felling trees would be difficult for the PCs, if not impossible. Perhaps only compromises would work in the end.

Forbidden Knowledge

The *Field Guide to the Fantastical World Around You* contains knowledge few mortals know, and fairies kill to prevent mortals from possessing it. Being the work of a human researcher, Arthur Spiderwick, the guide is incomplete, sometimes obviously so to the detriment of its readers. DMs using forbidden books might make them filled with errors or even deliberately misleading. Such tomes of forbidden knowledge might extend to gods, dragons, or any other major power that's not part of the PCs' "normal" world. Forbidden knowledge extends to more than just information, but also to actions or the senses. For example, in *Spiderwick* mortals should never taste fairy food lest they never want to eat real food again. The tale of Persephone eating pomegranate seeds in the Underworld also serves as a classical example.

Game worlds might also contain restricting elements that hide the truth. PCs and others (like Aunt Lucinda in *Spiderwick*) who do not believe in the widely held lies are ostracized, imprisoned, or committed. Well-meaning clerics might try to cure such delusions, hiding contradictory evidence for the good of all. A conspiracy of kingdom-manipulating spellcasters, corrupt religions or gods, or even the taint of otherworldly influences such as angel, devils, or even the *Far Realm* (presented in DRAGON #330), all make for excellent widely hidden knowledge.

From the Fantastical World Around You

According to Arthur Spiderwick's *Field Guide to the Fantastical World Around You*, any number of unbelievable creatures lurk and live just out of human sight. Presented here is one of those whimsical creatures, inspired by *The Spiderwick Chronicles*.

House Brownie

Tiny Fey
Hit Dice: 1d6 (3 hp)
Initiative: +4
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 20 ft. (average)
Armor Class: 17 (+2 size, +4 Dex, +1 natural), touch 16, flat-footed 13
Base Attack/Grapple: +0/–10
Attack: Tiny short sword +0 melee (1d3–2/19–20) or tiny short bow +6 ranged (1d2/×3)
Space/Reach: 2–1/2 ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/cold iron, low-light vision, spell resistance 11
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +6, Will +4
Abilities: Str 6, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14
Skills: Appraise +4, Bluff +4, Escape Artist +8, Handle Animal +4, Hide +16, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +4*, Move Silently +8*, Open Lock +6, Spot +4*, Tumble +6
Feats: Dodge
Environment: Farm house, manor, temperate forests
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 1
Treasure: No coins; 50% goods; 50% items
Alignment: Always chaotic good
Advancement: 1–5 HD (Tiny)
Level Adjustment: +4

This slender, youthful humanoid stands barely two hands tall, sporting batlike ears and whiskers. His exaggerated proportions give him a cheerful but goofy look.

Long ago, these fey left their ancestral lands to dwell among humans and elves. Each house brownie chooses a particular home, usually a rural building with large grounds, to serve as her home range. It shares this home with common vermin like rats—sometimes keeping them as pets—and the house's larger residents. A house brownie rarely has any trouble with her taller neighbors as long as these humanoids treat her well and recognize her as the boss. House brownies never tolerate others of their own kind intruding within their homes.

While brownies keep their house in order, "order" is a matter of the brownie's opinion. Maintaining wall passages, decorating hiding holes, and squirreling away food are viewed as highly important activities. While they do not steal, they view all items in the house as theirs and move them around to their taste, becoming rather surly if items are removed from their "proper place."

Averaging 1 foot tall and weighing less than 3 pounds, brownies dress their slight bodies in handmade clothes cut from castoffs. Living long lives, they might learn many languages, dependent on what languages are spoken nearby. House brownies often speak Common, Elven, Sylvan, and occasionally Dwarf, Giant, Gnome, or Goblin.

Combat

House brownies are extremely weak combatants and avoid direct confrontations although they often deliberately taunt larger creatures. Brownies create complex flight plans for use in their home territory as well as hiding holes already worked out in case their mischief goes awry.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*alter self, calm animals, detect magic, open/close, pass without trace, prestidigitation, speak with animal*; 3/day—*alarm, animate rope, charm animal* (DC 13), *dancing lights, detect secret doors, entangle* (DC 13), *knock, locate object, mage hand.* Caster level 5th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Skills: House brownies have a +6 bonus on Listen, Move Silently, and Spot checks within the house they've adopted as their own. These bonuses only function within one home that a brownie has resided in for more than 30 days.

AN INTERVIEW WITH AUTHORS TONY DITERLIZZI AND HOLLY BLACK

Did any real life incidents make it into the books?

Holly: *My husband was an inspiration for both Jared and Simon. He was always getting in trouble in school plus [he has] an insane love of animals—he's brought home parrots, cats, lizards, snakes, and lots of tarantulas. And I was an older sister, so a lot of the mean-older sister stuff is based on me.*

Has D&D influenced your writing?

Holly: *D&D has had this weird role in my life. I met my husband through D&D and I met Tony because I was working for* d8 Magazine, *so that was through gaming too. But regarding writing—when I was a kid I was really into dolls because I got to make up stories and share them with my friends. When I discovered D&D, it was a way to continue making up stories in a way that wasn't considered juvenile. That was a huge thing for me.*

What other *Spiderwick* books and projects should we expect?

Tony: *Currently, I'm restoring the* Field Guild *with a scientific approach and an Audubon look. I hope that my fans from the gaming world will really like it. It's like a* Monster Manual *for the mainstream public!*

*There is talk of a possible sketchbook, in the meantime. This spring we're releasing a small book that's more like an interactive journal. (*The Notebook for Fantastical Observations *due out June 2005.)*

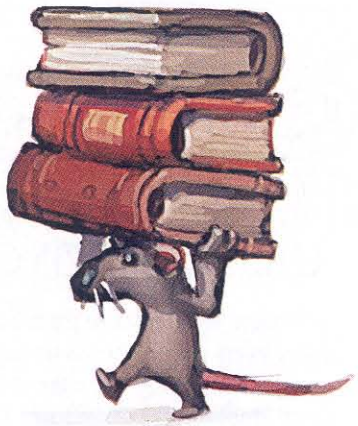
A *Spiderwick* movie is in the works. As co-executive producers, when can we expect to see it?

Tony: *There's talk of a 2007 release date. I am trying not to get too excited and I take it all with a grain of salt. We met with the director, Mark Waters* [Freaky Friday, Mean Girls] *who wants to try and keep the script very close to the books. Brent Forrester (the screenwriter) is a W.B. Yeats fan, so [he] really gets the folklore. My fingers are crossed!*

DRAGON *would like to thank both Tony and Holly for taking the time to talk with us and wishes them all the best with their upcoming projects.*

by Andy Collins
illustrated by Niklas Janssen

OFFICIAL ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS



This month, the Sage cracks open his spellbook to solve the mysteries of magic. You can email the Sage your questions at **sageadvice@paizo.com**.

Can an *antimagic field* be detected by *detect magic*?

No. By definition, magical effects can't function within an *antimagic field*. Since *detect magic's* effect would have to extend into the *antimagic field* in order to detect it, the *antimagic field* can't be detected by *detect magic*.

Is it possible for *detect magic* to locate an invisible creature?

Yes, although not very efficiently. Remember that *detect magic* reveals the location of magical auras over the course of three rounds. A creature rendered invisible by a spell or magical effect could be located via *detect magic*, but only after three rounds of concentration. Furthermore, the invisible creature must remain within the spell's area for the entire three rounds of concentration; if the creature moves out of the area, the process must start again from the beginning. However, even if everything works according to plan, you still don't necessarily know that you've found an invisible creature—at best, the caster of *detect magic* would know that he had located a faint aura of illusion magic in a particular space.

Can you use *detect magic* to detect supernatural effects? For example, can it detect a wildshaped druid?

Supernatural abilities are magical, and thus their effects would produce magical auras. Although the *detect magic* spell doesn't have a line entry for supernatural effect, you can use the same line as "Magic item (caster level)"—a supernatural effect's caster level is equal to the creature's Hit Dice unless noted otherwise (*Monster Manual*, page 315).

What kind of damage does a slashing wooden weapon (such as a longsword crafted with the *ironwood* spell) deal if I cast *brambles* (*Complete Divine*, page 156) on it? What about a piercing wooden weapon?

The *brambles* spell description assumes that the spell is being cast on a bludgeoning weapon (all example weapons are bludgeoning), so when it says "the weapon deals both piercing and bludgeoning damage" it means that the weapon's damage is now treated as piercing damage in addition to its normal type of damage.

However, the spell can be cast on any wooden weapon, not just a bludgeoning weapon. A slashing weapon that gained this effect would deal slashing and piercing damage. A piercing weapon that gained this effect would only deal piercing damage.

Do the bonuses granted by *brambles* and *spikes* (*Complete Divine*, page 156 and page 181) stack?

No and yes. The two spells each grant an enhancement bonus on attack rolls, and thus only the higher enhancement bonus (that granted by *spikes*) would apply. However, the damage bonus granted by each spell is untyped and would therefore stack with each other.

The *entangle* spell allows for DMs to alter the effect of the spell based on the nature of the entangling plants. Exactly what sorts of effects can the DM create? What are the limits of these changes? What sorts of plants or terrain would cause these kinds of effects?

Page 8 of the DUNGEON MASTER'S *Guide* talks about adjudicating situations that aren't explicitly covered by the rules: "When in doubt, remember this handy little rule: Favorable conditions add +2 on any d20 roll, and unfavorable conditions penalize the roll by –2."

The "DM's best friend" can easily be applied to this situation. Are the plants in the area particularly scarce or frail? Grant a +2 bonus on saves to resist the spell and a +2 bonus on checks to escape it. Is the area filled with so many dangling vines and branches that the characters have to hack through it just to move? Apply a –2 penalty on such saves and checks. It's probably not worth the DM's time to worry about more complex alterations—anything much more detailed may well merit an entirely different spell be created to manifest such effects.

Is a Balance check required to stand up while prone in the area of a *grease* spell? What about to perform other move actions?

No and no.

Would casting *detect magic* be considered an attack for the purpose of ending an *invisibility* spell?

The *invisibility* spell states that "for purposes of the spell, an attack includes any spell targeting a foe *or whose area or effect includes a foe.*" [Emphasis added.] *Detect magic* and similar spells have an area, so if this area included a foe, it would count as an "attack" for this purpose.

Would an invisible character counterspelling an enemy's spell count as making an attack and thus end the invisibility? What about a targeted *dispel magic*?

According to page 150 of the *Player's Handbook,* "to use a counterspell, you must select an opponent as the target of a counterspell." Thus, by definition, this falls into the category of spells "targeting a foe," so a counterspell would end the invisibility.

Likewise, a *dispel magic* targeted on a foe is a spell "targeting a foe," so it would end the invisibility.

Does casting *flaming sphere* in a non-offensive manner—such as to start a campfire—count as an attack for purposes of ending an *invisibility* spell?

No. As stated in the description of the *invisibility* spell, actions directed at unattended objects do not break the spell. You could use *flaming sphere* to burn down a whole village and it wouldn't end an *invisibility* spell, even if the ensuing blaze included foes in its area (since that would fall into the category of causing harm indirectly). (Of course, the Sage does not condone such reckless activity.)

Does casting *sanctuary* end an *invisibility* spell because it requires a foe to resist its effect with a saving throw? What about *wall of fire*?

No. Any spell that only causes harm indirectly (including causing harm due to another creature's actions, such as *sanctuary*) is not an attack, even if its effects can be resisted with a saving throw.

Other spells that can fall into this category include *fire trap* (since its harmful effect is triggered by a character opening the trapped item), *spike stones* (since its harmful effect is triggered by a character walking over it), and *wall of fire* (since its harmful effect is triggered by a character approaching within 20 feet).

Of course, even some of these spells may be able to be cast in such a way as to end an *invisibility* spell. If *wall of fire* is cast within 20 feet of another creature, it immediately and directly causes harm to that creature, which would end *invisibility.*

Do the cleaning and dirtying effects of *prestidigitation* remain in effect after the spell's duration ends? In other words, if I use *prestidigitation* to clean dirt off my clothes, do my clothes remain clean when the spell ends, or do they magically become dirty again?

As stated in the spell's description, "Any actual change to an object (beyond just moving, cleaning, or soiling it) persists only 1 hour." Thus, the effects listed within the parentheses remain beyond the spell's normal duration.

Can you ride your own *Tenser's floating disk*?

No. While you could command your *Tenser's floating disk* to move close enough for you to sit upon it, it has no ability to move under its own power. It can only follow you at a maximum rate equal to your normal speed.

If a spell that targets a creature (such as *cause fear*) is tied to the area of an *unhallow* spell, does it target creatures inside the area every round, or only when they enter the area?

A spell tied to *unhallow* picks its targets only when they enter the area, not every round they remain within. In the case of *cause fear*, each creature entering the area with fewer than 6 Hit Dice would be required to attempt a Will save against the effect, but once within the area would not be required to save against the effect again. If a creature left the area and returned later, the spell would be effectively "cast" again, targeting that creature once again.

Spells that don't have targets (such as *invisibility purge*) simply apply their effects continuously within the area of the *unhallow* spell. A character who turned invisible after entering an unhallowed area with *invisibility purge* tied to the area would instantly be rendered visible by the purging effect.

Does the bonus to caster level from the Practiced Spellcaster feat (from *Complete Arcane* and *Complete Divine*) apply before or after other caster level bonuses (such as those from the Good or Healing domains)?

The bonus from Practiced Spellcaster applies whenever it would be most beneficial to the caster. A 4th-level cleric/4th-level fighter with the Healing domain and Practiced Spellcaster would cast conjuration (healing) spells as a 9th-level caster (base caster level 4th, +4 from Practiced Spellcaster, +1 from the Healing domain). A 4th-level cleric/4th-level rogue with Practiced Spellcaster who activates a *bead of karma* (from a strand of *prayer beads*) would cast his spells as a 12th-level caster (base 4, +4 from Practiced Spellcaster, +4 from *bead of karma*).

How does Practiced Spellcaster interact with the wild magic class feature of the wild mage (from *Complete Arcane*)?

The –3 penalty and +1d6 bonus to the wild mage's caster level are applied as a single step in the process of determining the wild mage's caster level. Since Practiced Spellcaster's bonus is always applied when it is most beneficial to the character (see previous answer), a wild mage with Practiced Spellcaster would typically apply the wild magic class feature first (subtracting 3 and adding 1d6 to her caster level) and then add the Practiced Spellcaster benefit, up to a maximum value equal to her character level.

For example, if a 5th-level wizard/4th-level wild mage with Practiced Spellcaster rolled a 1 on the 1d6 bonus to her caster level, her caster level for that spell would be 9th (base 9th, –3 from wild magic penalty, +1 from wild magic bonus, +4 from Practiced Spellcaster up to a maximum equal to her character level). If she rolled a 6, her caster level would be 12th (base 9th, –3 from wild magic penalty, +6 from wild magic bonus; the Practiced Spellcaster bonus would not apply since it would increase her caster level above her character level).

On the other hand, imagine a wild mage whose caster level (before applying the effects of the wild magic class feature) is less than her character level, such as a wild mage with levels of rogue or other non-spellcasting class. She might well choose to apply the Practiced Spellcaster bonus first, before applying the wild magic modifiers. A rogue 4/wizard 5/wild mage 4 would have a base caster level of 9th before any other modifiers are applied. Adding Practiced Spellcaster's bonus would increase this to 13th, at which point the penalty and bonus from wild magic would be applied. The Sage recommends that players averse to frequently recalculating caster level avoid playing a character with this combination, as it is likely to cause headaches.

Dragon

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by Troy E. Taylor

ARCHAIC ARMAMENTS

BARBARIAN

A barbarian's choice of tools and weapons says a lot about his background, traditions, and beliefs. His handmade and often crude equipment can evoke a provocative image, such as the stoic savage of noble bearing, the inventive Stone Age hunter, or the stubborn traditionalist who eschews the use of modern tools to honor the old ways. Using primitive weapons helps you peel away the layers of civilization and reveal your barbarian's more primal nature. A barbarian can give up proficiency with all metal martial weapons in order to gain proficiency with these weapons.

Atlatl: This tool, a flexible wooden stick about 2 feet long, enables a stone-tipped dart to fly a greater distance and to strike for greater damage. It is the barbarian's first choice against creatures of size Large or greater, and some attribute its nearly universal use among prehistoric peoples as a factor in the hunting of the great mammals to extinction. The atlatl shaft is sometimes decorated with elaborate carvings.

The atlatl usually has a small stone attached to the shaft that acts as a counterweight. The projectile is either a stone-tipped dart or a stone-tipped javelin. The dart's butt is placed in a hooked groove at the end of the atlatl. The thrower snaps his forearm forward, launching the dart. A character trying to use the atlatl without proficiency suffers a –2 penalty on attack rolls in addition to the normal –4 nonproficiency penalty.

Hunting Boomerang: Similar in shape to the boomerang from page 155 of the *Complete Warrior*, this weapon does not return to the thrower, has slightly greater range, and deals lethal damage.

Microlith Barbed Longspear: Microliths are small triangular-shaped stones with sharp edges wedged into the shaft of a spear just beneath the tip. This effectively creates a serrated edge, causing more damage than the normal longspear. A microlith barbed longspear has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe.

Stone Celt: This L-shaped wood club has a stone head attached, making it the forerunner of the heavy mace.

Stone Handaxe: This stone has a chipped edge for cutting that fits into the palm. Warriors carry stone handaxes for sentimental or superstitious reasons even after flint-edge knives and steel daggers have made them obsolete. Upon passing an initiation into adulthood, a young man receives a stone handaxe from a village elder. The ceremonial first cut after a kill is usually done with a stone handaxe to emphasize the hunter's bonds to community and nature.

BARBARIAN WEAPONS

Exotic Weapons	Cost*	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Light Melee Weapon							
Stone handaxe	5 sp	1d4	1d6	×2	—	2 lb.	Slashing
One-Handed Melee Weapon							
Stone celt	5 sp	1d6	1d8	19–20/×2	—	10 lb.	Bludgeoning
Two-Handed Melee Weapon							
Microlith barbed longspear	5 gp	1d8	1d10	×3	—	9 lb.	Piercing
Ranged Weapons							
Atlatl	4 gp	—	—	—	—	2 lb.	—
Atlatl dart	5 sp	1d4	1d6	19–20/×2	80 ft.	1/2 lb.	Piercing
Atlatl javelin	1 gp	1d6	1d8	×3	120 ft.	1/2 lb.	Piercing
Hunting boomerang	15 gp	1d4	1d6	×2	25 ft.	2 lb.	Bludgeoning

* The cost is provided for the purpose of creating the items using the Craft (weaponsmithing) skill. They are rarely available for purchase in any settlement larger than a village.

by Mike Mearls

THE MULTICLASSED BARD

BARD

The bard has a talent for a lot of different abilities. While a bard is good in many areas, he masters few. By taking levels in a second class, you can improve your bard's abilities in one area with only minor drawbacks in others.

Generally speaking, the bard multiclasses best with other classes that thrive using light armor. Unless you want to give up your spellcasting ability, you should avoid classes that rely on heavy armor. The bard makes a poor match with other spellcasting classes, as you end up with two sets of spells that might be too weak to have an effect on an encounter.

As a bard, you gain your highest-level spells at 16th level. If you plan on using your character up to 20th level, that gives you four levels to devote to other classes without losing access to your mightiest spells.

Barbarian: As is the case for most characters who rely on light armor, the barbarian class turns your bard into an effective combatant. The extra speed you gain allows you to cast your spells, especially cures, where they're needed most. The barbarian's rage temporarily turns you into a potent fighter, although while raging you cannot use magic or your bardic music abilities. Save it for after you have fortified the party with your spells and bardic music.

Cleric: This class offers little that the bard doesn't already have. *Cure light wounds* is already on the bard spell list, and you need plenty of cleric levels to turn undead that are an appropriate challenge for your level.

Druid: In many ways, the druid's strengths run counter to the bard's abilities. You cannot use bardic music while in animal form and taking levels in two spellcasting classes leaves you with two sets of weak spells rather than one strong selection.

Fighter: The fighter class is an excellent way to turn a bard into a martial character. The bonus feats it offers can improve your mastery over a weapon, helping to make up for your merely average base attack progression. If you focus on archery, feats such as Rapid Shot and Precise Shot can spell the difference between a mediocre ranged attacker and an effective one. Since bards have poor hit points and generally low Armor Class, ranged weapons give you a great way to contribute in battle. If you wish to engage in melee, you should consider Spring Attack to mask your poor Armor Class and low hit points. Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialization can also turn puny attacks into devastating ones.

Monk and Paladin: Since bards cannot be lawful, they cannot take these classes.

Ranger: This class is a good choice if you want to improve your fighting talents while preserving your spread of skills. The ranger earns just as many skill ranks as the bard, allowing you to keep skills such as Bluff, Diplomacy, and Perform maxed out. The combat styles and favored enemies abilities improve your fighting ability, particularly the archery option. However, the two levels of ranger needed to gain a combat style would net you two feats if you went into fighter. Ranger becomes the better choice if you wish to avoid the fighter's poor skill ranks or if the party needs access to Track and Survival.

Rogue: Perhaps the most effective combination with the bard class, multiclassing into rogue makes you a vastly superior supporting fighter while preserving your spread of skills. This class offers defensive abilities such as evasion and uncanny dodge that help make up for your light armor and low hit points. The ability to sneak attack can turn your blows into crippling strikes, particularly if the party already has a fighter, barbarian, or paladin who shoulders most of the melee combat duty.

Sorcerer and Wizard: Unless you aim to enter a specific prestige class that requires levels in bard and sorcerer or wizard, avoid this combination.

by Amber E. Scott

TOKENS OF FAITH III

CLERIC

Holy symbols don't have to be stereotypical amulets on a chain. Temples can craft them in unusual shapes out of exotic materials, and some might even grant minor bonuses to worshipers. The following holy symbols are particularly appropriate for clerics devoted to a philosophical concept rather than a particular deity, but any cleric who possesses the correct domain can use them.

While each of these symbols grants a minor bonus to a character, they are not magic items and do not take up a slot. To gain the benefit of the item, the user must be a cleric with the domain the symbol is tied to as one of his chosen domains. All the holy symbols presented here cost 100 gp.

For more specialized holy symbols see "Tokens of Faith" in *Dragon* #327 and "Tokens of Faith II" in *Dragon* #329. You can order them at **paizo.com/backissues**.

Animal: Four finger holes in this thin piece of wood allow the cleric to wear it over his knuckles. The smooth and polished wood supports four small claws jutting out over the cleric's fingers when he wears the item. The symbol is sometimes decorated with feathers, beads, or etchings of animals. Wearing this symbol allows the cleric to use his domain's *speak with animals* spell-like ability at +1 caster level.

Earth: This stone cuisse is cunningly carved to be thin and light yet durable. It is an oval-shaped plate 3 to 10 inches long with a rough exterior surface. Threads of gold and silver wink from the folds of rock, and tiny gems no bigger than a pinhead stud the surface irregularly. The cleric straps the cuisse to his thigh and while wearing it gains a +1 circumstance bonus on Strength checks made to resist a trip attempt.

Evil: This symbol takes the form of a hood of any color or material. The lining, however, is always of fine black silk. When folded back, the edge of the hood reveals a band of silver runes and one large, bone-white symbol positioned over the cleric's brow. The cleric who wears this hood gains a +1 profane bonus on Knowledge (the planes) checks when dealing with good outsiders.

Law: Dozens of tiny rings made from different types of precious metal form this symbol. The rings link together intricately to form a downward-pointing triangle. A leather collar the cleric wears around his neck attaches to the top edge of the triangle. The wearer of this symbol gains a +1 circumstance bonus on saving throws made to resist spells with the compulsion subtype.

Luck: This thin belt is made of many small squares of colorful fabric sewn onto a leather backing. The patchwork belt usually has symbols for fortune or for a particular deity known for luck worked into its pattern, and the cleric fastens it with a bright golden buckle. Once per day, the belt's wearer may reroll a percentile die roll made to stabilize.

Protection: A cleric can wear this two-inch-long badge in one of three places: on a collar around his neck with the badge against his throat, on a band around his wrist with the badge against the vein, or pinned over his heart. The shield-shaped badge is made of polished cherry-red wood. The cleric who wears this badge gains a +1 circumstance bonus on his attack roll when using the aid another action to grant an ally an Armor Class bonus.

Trickery: One side of this large, square piece of cloth is ordinary gray cotton, while the other side is brilliantly-colored silk (usually crimson or emerald green). A cleric can wear the cloth around his neck as a scarf, on his head as a kerchief, in his pocket as a handkerchief, around a limb as a bandage, or any of a dozen other ways. A cleric who uses the cloth as part of a disguise gains a +1 circumstance bonus on his Disguise check.

TOKENS OF THE FAITH

Issue	Domains Covered
327	Chaos, Destruction, Fire, Healing, Knowledge, Magic, Travel
329	Air, Death, Good, Plant, Strength, Sun, War, Water
331	Animal, Earth, Evil, Law, Luck, Protection, Trickery

by William L. Christensen

ENVIRONMENTAL WEAPON LISTS

DRUID

Traditionally, druids are thought of as forest-dwelling folk, an assumption reflected by their weapon proficiencies. However, what if your druid comes from a vast desert or from near a metropolitan area? The following lists provide alternative weapon proficiencies designed with such campaigns in mind. A character using an alternative weapon list is proficient with all weapons on the list instead of those in which druids commonly have proficiency. Check out *Frostburn*, *Sandstorm*, and *Stormwrack* for more environment-based weaponry.

Aquatic/Coastal

Druids from coastland or aquatic areas are more adept at using piercing weapons such as spears and tridents, as locals often use those tools for spearing fish and find them easier to wield underwater. Druids from coastland or aquatic areas are proficient with the club (often fashioned from driftwood), dagger, dart, longspear, net, quarterstaff, sling, spear, shortspear, and trident.

Arctic/Tundra

The frozen lands are brutal and unforgiving, and all but druids and most hearty of souls find themselves at odds with this environment's harsh nature. Druids hailing from this region learn to use weapons that mimic the land's deadly and unforgiving nature or those easily found or crafted in an environment miserlike with its raw materials. Arctic druids are proficient with the club, dagger, handaxe, light pick (those living in the arctic rely on ice picks when climbing hills or mountains), morningstar, quarterstaff, scythe, sickle, sling, spear, and throwing axe.

Desert/Wasteland

Wood, a scarce commodity in deserts and wastelands, rarely finds use in weapons used by druids hailing from such regions. As such, the desert druid lacks proficiency in many of the mainstays of druid weaponry (such as the club and quarterstaff). Because people living in the desert must adapt to severe conditions, desert druids learn to use several relatively exotic weapons. Desert druids are proficient in the falchion, javelin, kukri, scimitar, shortspear, sling, spear, and whip.

Grassland/Savannah

Grasslands and savannahs are vast, open spaces, harboring few places to hide when danger rears its head. Thus, druids who live in such areas learn to use more ranged weapons than traditional druids, allowing them to strike out at great distance. Druids of the grassland and savannah know how to use bolas, the javelin, longspear, scythe (long used as an implement for cutting grass and hay), shortbow, shortspear, sickle, sling, and spear.

Mountain

Druids from mountainous regions have a reputation for being more warlike and barbaric than their other brethren and thus are proficient with a more deadly array of weaponry. Some of their weapons double as tools used for mining. Many, if not most, dwarven druids can make use of this weapon proficiency list. Mountain druids have proficiency with the battleaxe, club, dagger, handaxe, heavy pick, light pick, quarterstaff, sling, and warhammer.

Subterranean/Underdark

Few subterranean inhabitants choose the druidic path, but those who do recognize nature's splendor even in the deepest depths below the surface. Their weapon proficiencies reflect the often tight and confining quarters of subterranean regions. Subterranean druids have proficiency in the club, dagger, heavy pick, light pick (also useful for digging through earth and stone), shortspear, shortsword, sling, and whip.

by Troy E. Taylor

MARINE MUNITIONS

FIGHTER

Fighters can make important contributions to a naval voyage—most notably as marines capable of defending the vessel from pirates and sea monsters. Over time, these marines have developed a number of items specifically for use when battling on the open seas.

Battle Rattle: These items consist of a hollow piece of wood containing a reed attached to a handle with a gear that raps against the reed when spun. Playing the battle rattle helps inspire the crew, conferring upon all allies within 30 feet a +1 morale bonus on any one skill check or attack roll made within the next round. It is effective only once per encounter, and it has no effect oustide of combat. A character using bardic music and a battle rattle in conjunction with the Inspire Courage ability increases the morale bonus granted by +1.

Faint enchantment; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, heroism; Price 3,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Captain Rogers's Battle Rattle: This magically enhanced wood instrument summons the crew to battle stations by making a repetitive clacking sound when the head is swiveled around the handle. *Captain Rogers's battle rattle* grants all bonuses of a normal battle rattle. Once per day, *Captain Rogers's battle rattle* can be used to also protect all allies within 30 feet with a *protection from arrows* spell. Once activated, this effect lasts for 7 hours or until 70 points of damage have been prevented.

Faint abjuration; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Items, *protection from arrows;* Price 14,100 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Corvus: This 15- to 20-foot-long plank has iron spikes affixed to one end and is held in an upright position on the main deck. When an opposing ship is close enough the crew cuts loose the corvus, which swings down onto the other ship's deck. The plank enables boarders to traverse the space between ships more easily, requiring only a DC 5 Balance check to do so.

Dragon's Teeth: Also called "skeggs," this row of iron spikes affixes to the prow of a small raiding ship, such as a longboat. When the ship rams another, the dragon's teeth dig into the wood of the other ship, holding the two ships together and making boarding easier. It takes three DC 23 Strength checks made with crowbars to disengage.

Drogue: The drogue is a float, usually a sealed wood drum or an inflated seal skin attached halfway along a harpoon's 30-foot line (see stats for the harpoon in the *Arms and Equipment Guide*). It works just like a bobber on a fishing line, preventing a creature from diving deep. Instead of the creature making an opposed Strength check against the person holding the harpoon line, it must make a DC 20 Strength check against the float. Each additional drogue adds +5 to the Strength DC. Every Strength check (whether it fails or succeeds) requires a Constitution check (DC 10 + 1 per previous check). After a failed Constitution check the creature becomes fatigued.

Fire Bucket: When held by its rough rope handle, this plain-looking wood bucket sealed with pitch magically fills with 3 gallons of fresh water. It takes one round to completely fill. This item not only helps fight fires, but it saves space otherwise devoted to storing fresh water on long voyages.

Faint conjuration; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Items, *create water;* Price 3,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Stink Pot: This noxious grenade is made by stuffing salt peter, sulfur, a type of gum resin called asafetida, and decayed fish into earthenware jugs. Using the stink pot requires lighting the oxtail wick and hurling it down onto the opposing ship from the main-tree (a stand on the main mast). Inhaling the foul mixture forces everyone within 10 feet of where it lands to make a DC 15 Fortitude save or become sickened for 1d4 minutes.

MARINE GEAR

Item	Cost	Weight
Battle rattle	3,000 gp	1 lb.
Captain Rogers's battle rattle	14,100 gp	1 lb.
Corvus	10 gp	60 lb.
Dragon's Teeth	100 gp	200 lb.
Drogue	1 gp	2 lb.
Fire bucket	3,000 gp	2 lb. (empty)
Stink pot	35 gp	30 lb.

by Richard Farrese

THE SIDEWINDER MONK

MONK

The Order of the Sidewinder, a small and controversial order, is among the world's strangest and least understood monastic organizations. Called sidewinder monks, those of this order imitate the attitudes of the deceptive snake from which they take their name.

Game Rule Information

The sidewinder monk is a variant monk. Unless otherwise noted, a sidewinder monk advances in the same manner as a monk (same Hit Die, base attack bonus, saving throw bonuses, skill points, and so on). When a character elects to take a level of monk or sidewinder monk, she may not later take levels in the other class.

Bonus Feat: At 1st level, a sidewinder monk may select either Persuasive or Stealthy as a bonus feat. At 2nd level, she may take either Improved Feint or Mobility. At 6th level, she may choose either Improved Disarm or Improved Trip. She need not have any of the prerequisites normally required for these feats to select them.

Silver Tongue (Ex): From 2nd level, the sidewinder monk masters deception. Using false promises, empty threats, and personal magnetism, the monk gains a +1 competence bonus on all Bluff checks. This bonus increases by +1 at 4th level and every even numbered level thereafter.

Earthbound (Ex): The sidewinder monk develops an innate connection with the earth, granting her a +4 competence bonus on opposed Strength checks made to resist bull rush or overrun attempts.

Sneak Attack (Ex): At 3rd level the sidewinder monk gains the ability to sneak attack, as the rogue ability. Her bonus damage increases every three levels thereafter (+2d6 at 6th, +3d6 at 9th, and so on).

Fangs (Su): A 4th-level sidewinder monk can grow fangs and gain a bite attack that deals 1d4 points of piercing damage (1d3 for Small monks). She can grow her fangs once per day at 4th level and one additional time for every four levels thereafter. The fangs remain for a number of rounds equal to 1 + Constitution bonus (minimum once). This attack is made at her highest attack bonus. If made with a flurry of blows, the bite attack and all other flurry attacks suffer a –2 penalty.

At 15th level the sidewinder monk may, once per day, use her bite attack to instantly slay a living creature. The target of this attack must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 sidewinder monk levels + Constitution modifier) or die. This is a poison attack.

Intimidating Stance (Ex): By imitating the attitude and demeanor of a sidewinder, the sidewinder monk gains a +4 competence bonus on all Intimidate checks. This bonus improves to +6 when using her fang ability.

THE SIDEWINDER MONK

Level	Special
1st	Bonus feat, flurry of blows, unarmed strike
2nd	Bonus feat, evasion, silver tongue
3rd	Fast movement, sneak attack +1d6
4th	Earthbound, fangs 1/day
5th	Ki strike (magic)
6th	Bonus feat, sneak attack +2d6
7th	Wholeness of body
8th	Fangs 2/day, intimidating stance
9th	Improved evasion, sneak attack +3d6
10th	Ki strike (lawful)
11th	Diamond body, greater flurry
12th	Fangs 3/day, sneak attack +4d6
13th	Diamond soul
14th	
15th	Fangs (death), sneak attack +5d6
16th	Fangs 4/day, ki strike (adamantine)
17th	Timeless body, tongue of the sun and moon
18th	Sneak attack +6d6
19th	
20th	Fangs 5/day, perfect self

by Amber E. Scott

KNIGHTLY EFFECTS

PALADIN

A paladin may find herself in need of specialized equipment when performing her duties or venturing on quests. Members of other character classes also find this equipment useful, but a paladin only shares such items with worthy comrades. Items that enhance or add to a weapon or piece of armor can only be applied to masterwork or magical weapons or armor.

Barding, Elvencraft: Elven knights of Corellon Larethian favor fast, graceful ponies and chargers as their steeds. The elves developed appropriately light, supple barding for their special mounts, and they sometimes pass on the technique to worthy knights of other races.

Elvencraft barding costs 150 gp more than regular masterwork barding. The rider of a mount wearing elvencraft barding gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Ride checks when coaxing her mount to make a leap. Elvencraft barding weighs 5 pounds less than regular barding (to a minimum of 5 lb.). Removing and fitting elvencraft barding only takes three times as long as it would take to remove or don regular armor, instead of five times.

Cartulary: Some paladins find it comforting to have their code of honor recorded in physical form. A cartulary is a bound book of inspirational religious texts, church documents, and prayers. It is not a complete scripture such as the prayer books clerics might carry, but a more personal document that illustrates and reinforces the tenets of the paladin's code. A paladin sometimes carries multiple cartularies so she can hand out copies to souls in need of guidance.

Engraved Pommel: Warriors decorate their weapons for many reasons, but paladins often do so as a sign of piety and faith, dedicating their weapons to their deities' service. Engraving the pommel of her weapon with sacred iconography also infuses it with a small bit of divinity. A weapon with an engraved pommel deals +1 point of damage when used to make a successful smite attack. If her weapon does not possess a pommel, the paladin can engrave its blade, haft, or another suitable area.

Faint evocation (good); CL 1st; creator must be paladin; Price 1,000 gp; Weight —.

Lantern, Silvern: A silvern lantern resembles an ordinary bullseye or hooded lantern, but glass plates set in the interior of the lantern cause it to cast a brilliant silver light instead of the ordinary yellow glow. Travelers who see such a glow at night can assume that the party bearing the light will be peaceful and offer assistance to those in need. Temples carefully guard the method for creating silvern lanterns, and knights destroy their own rather than risk them falling into unscrupulous hands. Silvern lanterns generate the same light radius as a regular bullseye or hooded lantern, depending on the style.

Patents of Nobility: The monarch or ruler of a land grants these documents. They contain a stylized family tree notarizing a knight's lineage. A paladin who presents her patents of nobility at court, or in any setting where nobility is present, gains a +1 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy checks made in that setting. The cost listed for this item represents its value to a collector or sage. You cannot purchase a legitimate patent of nobility; it must be given to you.

Tabard: A paladin wears this short, sleeveless tunic over her armor. She usually has her tabard emblazoned with either her family's coat-of-arms or the symbol of her temple, deity, or creed. Anyone viewing a paladin's tabard gains a +2 circumstance bonus on any Knowledge (nobility and royalty) or Knowledge (religion) checks to identify the paladin's allegiance or religion.

A paladin can also procure a tabard for her mount. This works exactly like a knight's tabard, but the circumstance bonuses do not stack.

NEW PALADIN EQUIPMENT

Item	Cost	Weight
Barding, elvencraft	special	special
Cartulary	10 gp	1 lb.
Engraved pommel	1,000 gp	—
Lantern, silvern, bullseye	22 gp	3 lbs.
Lantern, silvern, hooded	17 gp	2 lbs.
Patents of nobility	250 gp	—
Tabard, knight's	5 gp	—
Tabard, mount's	7 gp	2 lbs.

by Joshua Cole

RANGERS MILITANT

RANGER

When you imagine a modern soldier or a historical warrior in the context of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game the first thing that might come to mind is the iconic fighter. For many military archetypes, including the full range of 21st-century soldiery, the ranger fits much better.

When the first hunter-gatherer tribes clashed in the antediluvian mists, one must assume they were, in D&D terms, a mix of barbarians and rangers. While barbarism faded with time (albeit not without more than a few recurrences), the combination of stealth, wilderness survival, and striking power embodied in the ranger has enjoyed great success throughout human history.

Almost every army in history—and certainly every successful one—employed fast-moving, lightly armored scouts to range ahead of its vanguard, flush for ambushers, find enemy encampments, and map out the lay of the land. No core class embodies these tasks better than the ranger.

Some military traditions dispensed entirely with ranks of fighter-class hoplites, legionnaires, knights, samurai, or musketeers, using instead fast-moving ranger-class irregulars. Perhaps most famously, the native tribes of North America employed tactics far more suitable to a ranger than to a fighter or even a barbarian. Their internecine strife was no less vicious for all its lack of field armies. Later, although under-equipped and outnumbered, they made an indelible impression on the European settlers who encountered them. That impression led those settlers to adopt many of the same tactics. In an era of massed armies, American revolutionaries harried British troops with a fighting style that, in D&D terms, could only be described as that of the ranger.

Two centuries later, nations great and small still employ this fighting style perfected by natives and irregulars. Nowhere does that apply more than in special forces units, such as the British SAS and the United States's SEALs, Green Berets, and US Army Rangers.

Both the D&D ranger and the modern special forces excel at tracking, enduring harsh environments, making effective use of camouflage, and moving unseen through underbrush. The two groups have other aspects in common as well. The archery combat style applies just as well to the specialized training modern elite soldiers receive, and many of the ranger's skills—Climb, Move Silently, Survival, Swim, and others—find their way into the intense regimen of special forces. How does this knowledge help your D&D ranger, though?

Elite military units don't use *entangle* and *speak with animals* spells, but many of their tactics, equipment, and weaponry can translate well into magic. They sometimes have need to set up detection systems (*alarm*), communicate over great distances (*animal messenger*), observe enemies without visible light (*darkvision*), jam enemy sensors (*nondetection*), and set effective traps (*snare* and *spike growth*). Even curative magic has its modern equivelent—behind enemy lines, every soldier must at some time become his own medic. Admittedly, the translation isn't perfect: *wind wall* and *tree stride* fall outside the realm of plausibility using modern technology.

Players looking to model their rangers on modern special forces should begin by looking for some magical artillery. One of the most important support mechanisms for special forces is targeted fire support from the air. You can emulate that by providing *fireball* support, such as with a *necklace of fireballs*. Because both rangers and elite military units work best when moving in small, fast-moving groups, *bags of holding* and *Heward's handy haversacks* are a must. If slow-moving characters like dwarves, gnomes, halflings, or heavily encumbered fighters join your party, you need to find a way to increase their movement. *Boots of striding and springing* make obvious choices, but better choices might include *winged boots, flying carpets,* or other ways of providing magical flight. In fact, getting your entire party in the air most effectively emulates the helicopter-based fast-roping techniques of SEALs and Rangers and maximizes your hit-and-run capabilities.

by Hal Maclean

BE A LOVER, NOT A FIGHTER

ROGUE

Want your rogues to live longer? Stop being a threat... or at least stop seeming like one.

A pacifist rogue, someone who refuses to carry weapons or harm living creatures, might in some cases actually outlive the stereotypical knife-twirling rogue everyone expects. Some enemies hesitate when confronted with a seemingly harmless foe. They might consider the options of ransom, interrogation, or even slavery. This gives your rogue precious time, both to keep breathing and to look for other options. Let the fighters fight! Spend your time on more productive pursuits, like hunting for treasure, escape routes, or simply unexpected opportunities. A pacifist rogue more than earns her keep. All it takes is the right attitude and a little preparation.

Charm, Wit, and Grace: Few of a rogue's class abilities suffer when used by a pacifist. Allocate your skills as needed for the campaign. Even if unarmed you can still pick locks, disarm traps, climb walls, or skulk in shadows. Make sure you put at least a few ranks into social skills like Bluff and Diplomacy, since the ability to talk your way out of nasty situations becomes even more vital when you can't fight your way out.

Since you refuse to live by the sword your role as the party's problem solver should evolve naturally. You must be versatile and quick thinking, never at a loss for words or without a clever way to exploit your surroundings. Once your DM realizes you always try to outwit an enemy or look for something useful in the area expect him to start including these opportunities more often. When you decide to adventure without weapons, new solutions to old problems begin to emerge.

Cautious Combatant: Combat, whether an ambush by drow raiders or a hungry owlbear, rears its head all too often during adventures. Even as a pacifist you may still take an active role in battle—just not necessarily one your enemies expect.

Sneak attack, the only rogue ability specifically geared to offense, is too handy to cast aside. You may deal nonlethal damage with a sneak attack when used in conjunction with a sap or unarmed strike. Take advantage of this. Since punching someone usually provokes an attack of opportunity you might consider taking a level of monk to gain not only unarmed strike, but Improved Grapple as a bonus feat, good saves, and possibly an enhanced Armor Class (if you have a Wisdom bonus).

Catch 'em All: Keep your eyes open for magic items that allow you to capture opponents, like *iron bands of Bilarro* or a *rope of entanglement.* Items that incapacitate or reduce an enemy's threat potential, such as a *horn of fog* or *eyes of doom,* also allow you to play a more active role in combat. Avoid merciful weapons since they tend to push you back into a rogue's traditional role, thinking with your blade as you skulk on the sidelines and wait for a chance to stab someone from behind.

Unexpected Tactics: Always stay active in combat. Do something—anything—every round. Even if all you do is shout "basilisk!" and cover you eyes it might distract your enemies long enough to help one of your friends get out of a sticky situation. Expect your more violent colleagues to reach for weapons and spell components at the first sign of trouble. Your job is to find options others overlook. Attacked in a kitchen? Toss a pie at the enemy wizard. Goblins raiding the farm? Stampede the cattle.

Resourceful, unique, and charming, your pacifist rogue could become the most popular character you ever play.

by Hal Maclean

FAMILIARITY BREEDS

SORCERER

Loyalty, while admirable in anyone, can greatly benefit sorcerers or wizards who keep their original familiars throughout their careers. Those who take the Improved Familiar feat and refuse to cast aside their cherished animal partner in favor of a more powerful creature might explore new abilities derived from this enhanced connection. This article lists several enhancements an arcane spellcaster with the Improved Familiar feat might gain if he retains his original familiar rather than acquiring a new and more powerful one. Each enhancement has a requisite level in an arcane spellcasting class as well as a specific familiar.

Blindsense (Ex): *Prerequisites: Arcane spellcaster level 12th, bat familiar.* You gain blindsense out to 20 feet. Using nonvisual senses, such as acute smell or hearing, you notice things others cannot see. See page 306 of the *Monster Manual* for a complete description of blindsense.

Hallucinatory Perspiration (Ex): *Prerequisites: Arcane spellcaster level 9th, toad familiar.* Your sweat causes creatures rash enough to bite you to suffer violent hallucinations. Whenever a creature vulnerable to poison bites you it must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 your arcane spellcaster class levels + your Constitution modifier) or be affected by the *confusion* spell for 1d4 rounds.

Nine Lives (Su): *Prerequisites: Arcane spellcaster level 5th, cat familiar.* When you roll to stabilize, you have a 50% chance of success instead of the standard 10% chance.

Regrow (Ex): *Prerequisites: Arcane spellcaster level 7th, lizard familiar.* You can heal your own wounds as a paladin lays on hands. Each day you can heal a total number of hit points of damage equal to half your arcane spellcasting level × your Charisma modifier).

Scent (Su): *Prerequisites: Arcane spellcaster level 7th, snake or weasel familiar.* You gain the scent ability. You can identify familiar odors just as normal humans do familiar sights. See page 314 of the *Monster Manual* for a complete description of the scent ability.

Second Memory (Ex): *Prerequisites: Arcane spellcaster level 5th, raven familiar.* You may seek your familiar's sometimes dubious advice. Whenever you attempt a Knowledge check for a Knowledge skill in which you have at least 1 rank your raven familiar attempts to assist you. It need only make a DC 10 Intelligence check to do so. If it succeeds, you receive the standard +2 bonus on your skill check.

Self-Cannibalize (Su): *Prerequisites: Arcane spellcaster level 9th, rat familiar.* Your will to survive allows you to feed upon your magic. Once per day you may, as a free action, sacrifice one of your available spell slots or prepared spells to convert some lethal damage you take from an attack or spell into nonlethal damage. The level of the spell sacrificed represents the number of hit points converted into nonlethal damage.

Tracker (Su): *Prerequisites: Arcane spellcaster level 9th, hawk or owl familiar.* You gain a +2 bonus on Move Silently checks. You also gain low-light vision. If you already have low-light vision, you can see three times as far as a normal human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination.

ALTERNATIVE FAMILIAR ABILITIES

Ability	Minimum Level	Familiar
Blindsense	12th	Bat
Hallucinatory Perspiration	9th	Toad
Nine Lives	5th	Cat
Regrow	7th	Lizard
Scent	7th	Snake or weasel
Second Memory	5th	Raven
Self-Cannibalize	9th	Rat
Tracker	9th	Hawk or owl

by Oliver Diaz

WIZARD AFFECTATIONS

Wizards have become associated with a variety of clichéd affectations. What follows are explanations of the historical meanings behind these symbols.

Athame (Wizard's Dagger): The athame is a double-edged, black-hilted, ornate dagger used to inscribe runes and circles of power. The athame is a physical extension of the wizard's will. To retain its effectiveness, the wizard must never use her athame for a mundane purpose like combat, eating, or carving.

Forked Beard: Wizards with a penchant for or specialization in conjuring most often wear a forked beard. It's also a temporary favorite of mages in the process of magic item creation or alchemy. The history of the forked beard is tied to the mundane equivalent of conjury: smithing. Smiths wear their beards separated so that it doesn't hang down and become ignited by the fire of the forge.

Binding of the Two Fingers: Apprentices under the tutelage of a venerable but celebrated wizard often bind their index and middle fingers as a sign of profound respect and dedication. This ritual signifies the consent for the apprentice to offer material help and assistance in return for the greater service of erudition. Why those two fingers? A respectful way to aid another person in walking, perhaps up a step, is to offer the two fingers as an anchor.

Eye Shadow: Since ancient times wizards have worn eye shadow to prevent malignant magic and curses from entering through their eyes. The ritualistic shadowing can range from a discreet coloring around the edges to a complete covering of the pits of the eyes.

Long Gray Beard: Naturally, long grey or white beards are attributed to great age and wisdom. However, in wizard circles it takes on a deeper meaning as the traditional mark of teachers. As most wizards take apprentices later in life, after they retire to research and scholarship, many younger wizards lacking beards consider it insulting for someone to approach them seeking apprenticeship. Such an action insinuates they are "over-the-hill." This does not stop younger accomplished wizards from taking apprentices early in life, only that it is inappropriate for the apprentice to volunteer himself indiscreetly.

Long Nails: Long nails symbolize the wizard's domination over or disdain for the material world. Given its negative connotation, evil wizards most often indulge in this affectation. The wearer shows that he rarely participates in manual, mundane labor, having other more supernatural ways of accomplishing things.

Pointed Hat: Hats, because of their placement on the head, symbolize wisdom and intelligence. The pointed form of the classic wizard's hat embodies something called the cone of power. The cone of power describes the gathered energy that a wizard calls to himself during spellcasting and its focus into a single purpose. The cone of power—seen from one direction—forms a circle, the symbol of the sun, unity, eternity, and rebirth. When viewed from the side, it forms a triangle—associated with the elements and pyramids. A pyramid has many mythological and mysterious associations, such as the power of hidden knowledge held by few (the peak of the pyramid) over many (the base).

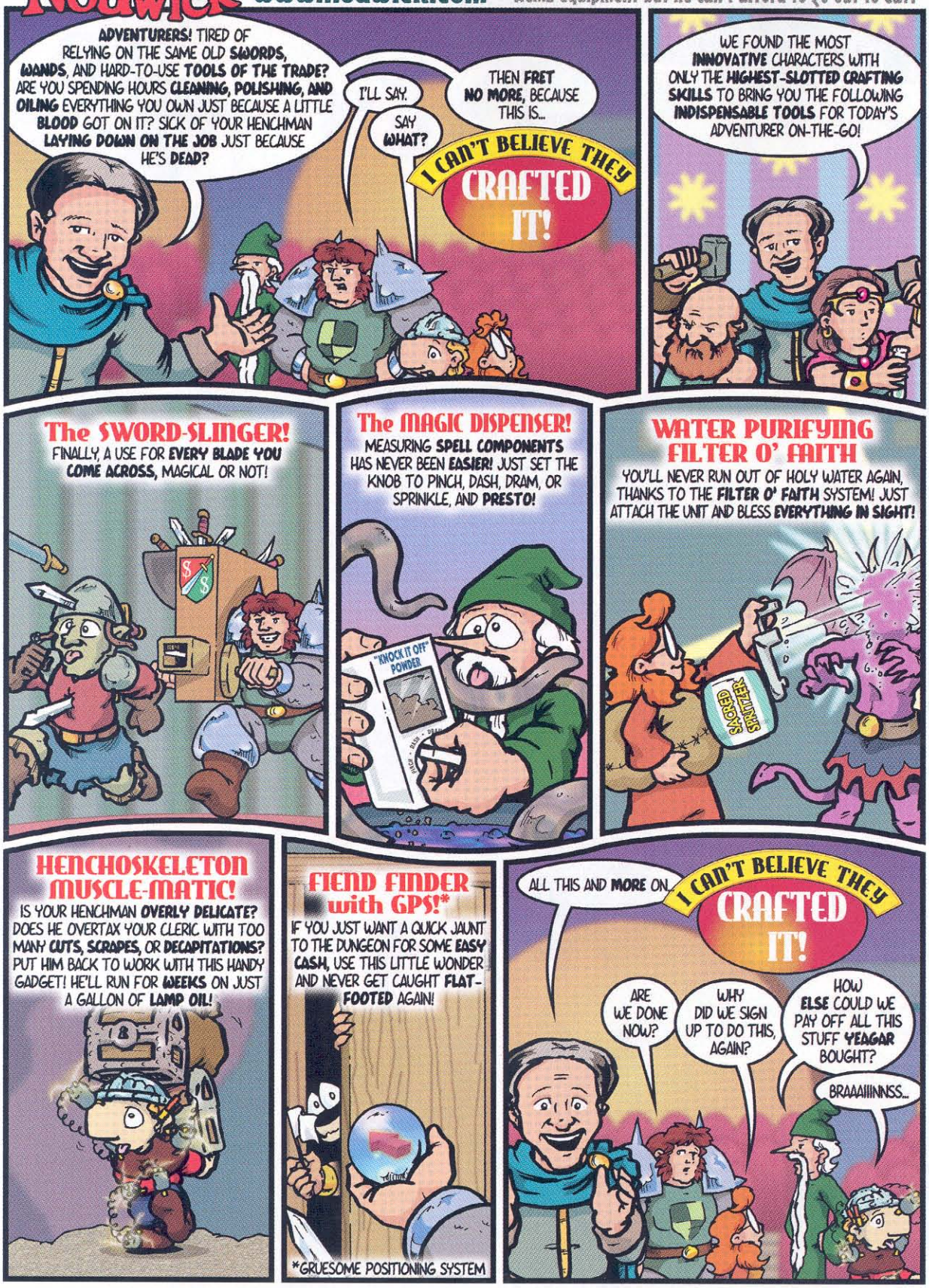
Ribbons: Ribbons represent the element of air, and as such are favorite accoutrements of air elementalists. Representative of smoke billowing from an incense burner, wizards often tie ribbons to beards, clothing or items.

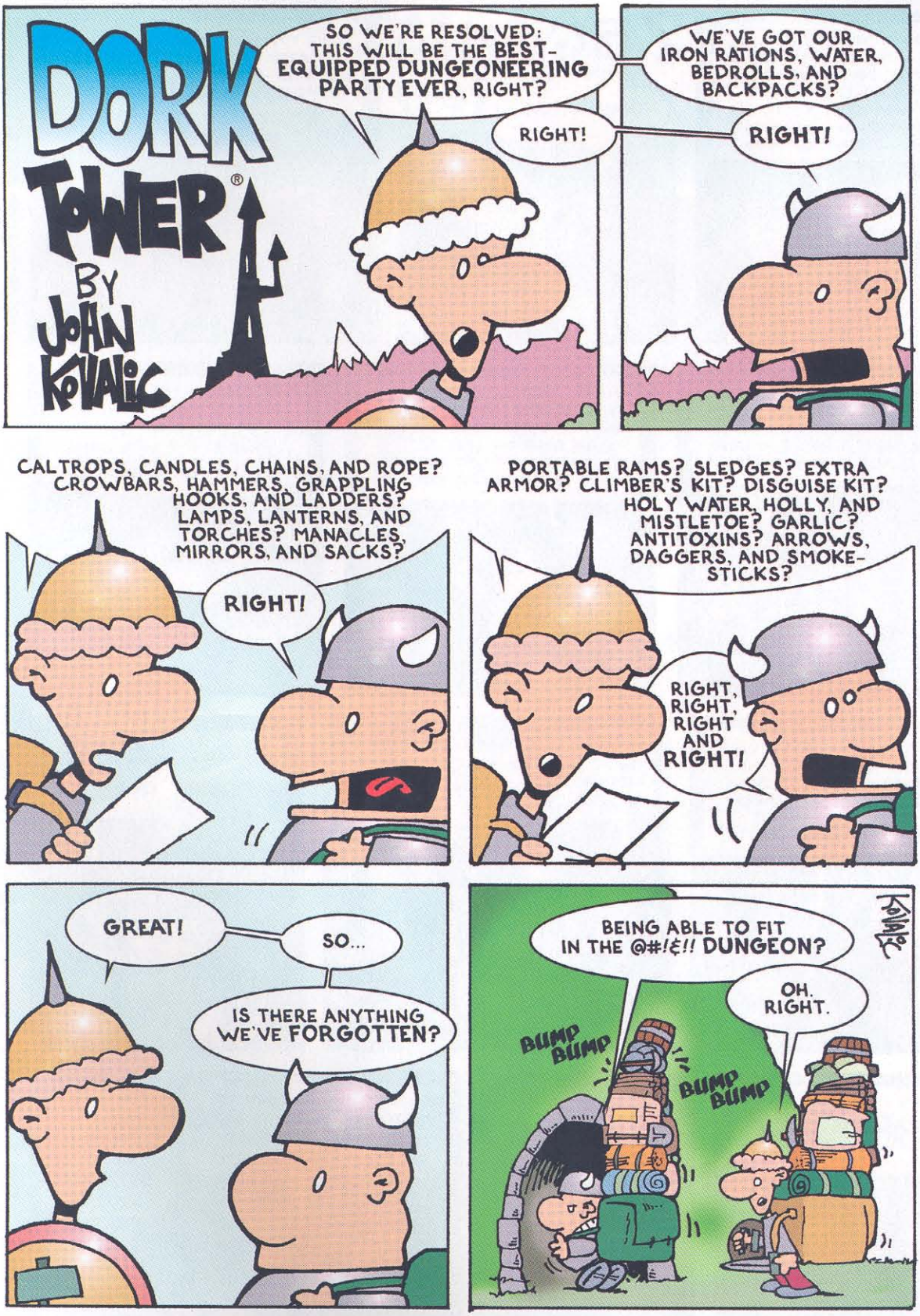
Staff: The staff is perhaps the quintessential accessory of the wizard. While magic imbues many staves, even mundane ones aid the wizard. A wizard's staff is primarily used to help focus and conduct the wizard's magical energies. Anyone seeing a wizard's staff gains a +2 circumstance bonus on any Knowledge (local) and Knowledge (nobility and royalty) checks to identify the bearer as a wizard.

Nodwick

by Aaron Williams
www.nodwick.com

Why is it that the coyote can afford all that expensive ACME equipment but he can't afford to go out to eat?


ADVENTURERS! TIRED OF RELYING ON THE SAME OLD SWORDS, WANDS, AND HARD-TO-USE TOOLS OF THE TRADE? ARE YOU SPENDING HOURS CLEANING, POLISHING, AND OILING EVERYTHING YOU OWN JUST BECAUSE A LITTLE BLOOD GOT ON IT? SICK OF YOUR HENCHMAN LAYING DOWN ON THE JOB JUST BECAUSE HE'S DEAD?
I'LL SAY.
SAY WHAT?
THEN FRET NO MORE, BECAUSE THIS IS...
I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY CRAFTED IT!
WE FOUND THE MOST INNOVATIVE CHARACTERS WITH ONLY THE HIGHEST-SLOTTED CRAFTING SKILLS TO BRING YOU THE FOLLOWING INDISPENSABLE TOOLS FOR TODAY'S ADVENTURER ON-THE-GO!
The SWORD-SLINGER!
FINALLY, A USE FOR EVERY BLADE YOU COME ACROSS, MAGICAL OR NOT!
The MAGIC DISPENSER!
MEASURING SPELL COMPONENTS HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER! JUST SET THE KNOB TO PINCH, DASH, DRAM, OR SPRINKLE, AND PRESTO!
"KNOCK IT OFF" POWDER
WATER PURIFYING FILTER O' FAITH
YOU'LL NEVER RUN OUT OF HOLY WATER AGAIN, THANKS TO THE FILTER O' FAITH SYSTEM! JUST ATTACH THE UNIT AND BLESS EVERYTHING IN SIGHT!
SACRED SPRINKLER
HENCHOSKELETON MUSCLE-MATIC!
IS YOUR HENCHMAN OVERLY DELICATE? DOES HE OVERTAX YOUR CLERIC WITH TOO MANY CUTS, SCRAPES, OR DECAPITATIONS? PUT HIM BACK TO WORK WITH THIS HANDY GADGET! HE'LL RUN FOR WEEKS ON JUST A GALLON OF LAMP OIL!
FIEND FINDER with GPS!*
IF YOU JUST WANT A QUICK JAUNT TO THE DUNGEON FOR SOME EASY CASH, USE THIS LITTLE WONDER AND NEVER GET CAUGHT FLAT-FOOTED AGAIN!
*GRUESOME POSITIONING SYSTEM
ALL THIS AND MORE ON...
I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY CRAFTED IT!
ARE WE DONE NOW?
WHY DID WE SIGN UP TO DO THIS, AGAIN?
HOW ELSE COULD WE PAY OFF ALL THIS STUFF YEAGAR BOUGHT?
BRAAAIIINNSS...


DORK TOWER®
By JOHN KOVALIC
SO WE'RE RESOLVED: THIS WILL BE THE BEST-EQUIPPED DUNGEONEERING PARTY EVER, RIGHT?
RIGHT!
WE'VE GOT OUR IRON RATIONS, WATER, BEDROLLS, AND BACKPACKS?
RIGHT!
CALTROPS, CANDLES, CHAINS, AND ROPE? CROWBARS, HAMMERS, GRAPPLING HOOKS, AND LADDERS? LAMPS, LANTERNS, AND TORCHES? MANACLES, MIRRORS, AND SACKS?
RIGHT!
PORTABLE RAMS? SLEDGES? EXTRA ARMOR? CLIMBER'S KIT? DISGUISE KIT? HOLY WATER, HOLLY, AND MISTLETOE? GARLIC? ANTITOXINS? ARROWS, DAGGERS, AND SMOKE-STICKS?
RIGHT, RIGHT, RIGHT AND RIGHT!
GREAT!
SO...
IS THERE ANYTHING WE'VE FORGOTTEN?
BEING ABLE TO FIT IN THE @#!€!! DUNGEON?
OH. RIGHT.
BUMP BUMP
BUMP BUMP
KOVALIC

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HTTP://WWW.LIVEJOURNAL.COM/USERS/MUSKRAT_JOHN

ZOGONIA
By Tony
FINISH YOUR BEER, KEV. DOMATO'S DELVERS HAS BEEN CONTRACTED TO KILL AN OGRE !!! IT WAS SPOTTED IN AN ABANDONED WAREHOUSE ON THE EDGE OF TOWN!
THRILLSVILLE.
HAVE YOU SEEN DINDIL? I TOLD HIM ABOUT THE OGRE JOB... HE WAS SUPPOSED TO MEET US HERE.
HERE HE COMES.
TONYM ©2005
TONY MOSELEY © 2005 WWW.ZOGONIA.COM
I PAID A WIZARD TO CAST A PRESSURE-ACTIVATED DEATH SPELL ON MY FINGER!! THE NEXT THING I TOUCH IS DEAD! LOOK-OUT OGRE!
DINDIL, THAT WAS A NEEDLESS EXPENSE. IN THE FUTURE, ASK ME BEFORE YOU SPEND YOUR GOLD ON SPELLS. STANDARD WEAPONRY WOULD HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT!
I DON'T NEED YOUR OPINIONS ABOUT HOW I SPEND MY MONEY, DOMATO. I'M NOT STUPID WITH GOLD! I'M A DWARF!!
IF YOU WANT TO LECTURE SOMEBODY ABOUT BEING MONEY-STUPID, LECTURE KEV! KEV CAN'T KEEP A GOLD COIN IN HIS POCKET FOR 10 MINUTES!
I DID NOT MEAN TO IMPLY--
DID YOU JUST EAT? YOU HAVE A LITTLE SMUDGE RIGHT HERE.
WHERE?
HERE?
Rub Rub
HRRRK*!
BAM!
PROVING DINDIL CORRECT, YOUR SHARE OF THE OGRE-MONEY WILL BE SPENT ON HIS RESURRECTION!
I MAY BE MONEY-STUPID, BUT HE'S STUPID-STUPID.